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HOMER AND SOCRATES

A. DE LAMARTINE

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HOMER AND SOCRATES.

BY

MRS. ELIZA WINCHELL SMITH,

LATE PRINCIPAL OF MYSTIC HALL SEMINARY FOR YOUNG LADIES, AT WEST MEDFORD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF A. DE LAMARTINE.

WITH A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED FOR TRANSLATOR BY

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1872.

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PREFACE.

So long as the Classics are studied and admired, so long will the names of Homer and Socrates find a welcome, and their private lives, or the items of them related in this volume by Lamartine, be read with interest. (A brief memoir of this most finished of French writers commences the book.)

This touching recital of the wanderings of the blind Poet is calculated to awaken a tender feeling for him, which gives new interest to the study of his poems; rendering this a judicious book for the young, just forming a taste for reading.

The Poem on Socrates, so full of the beautiful imagery of that age of fable, will be precious to the classical scholar, while the clearer light in the mind of Socrates about the gods, and his firm conviction, *at that early date*, of "a One True and

Living God," is deeply interesting to the Theologian.

The translation is literal throughout,—a difficult achievement in a Poem of this writer's beautiful style and finish, and must excuse a few imperfect rhymes.

The Poem is so full of gems of thought, it has well repaid the labor.

E. W. S.

BOSTON, September 4, 1871.

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M. DE LAMARTINE.

FROM A COMPENDIUM OF FRENCH LITERATURE.

EDUCATED by his mother in the requirements of religion, M. De Lamartine owed to this first education the principles which have inspired so many sublime pages.

He was twenty-eight years of age when he published his first "Méditations religieuses," which, welcomed with enthusiasm, revealed a new poesie more beautiful and more true than that of the ancients. It was not a faded imitation of the past, a worship of the pagan muses without faith,—mythology so cold and colorless to us. The poetry of Lamartine expressed what touches the heart of the man of the nineteenth century most deeply,—that pensive melancholy, that vague sadness of soul, those restless doubts, those profoundly despairing thoughts, into which the Old World, *without faith*, was thrown. Every one found his own feelings portrayed there, and found them expressed in melodious verse.

The mission of Lamartine was consequently plainly manifest.

The "Nouvelles Méditations poétiques" appeared with the imprint of a riper and more religious strength of mind yet. Indeed, in his "Harmonies poétiques et

religieuses" the poet seemed to chant, here below, the songs of heaven.

In 1832 M. Lamartine undertook a voyage to the East,—the country of his aspirations and his dreams. At the end of May he embarked at Marseilles with his wife and daughter Julia in a vessel he himself had equipped and armed. He carried a library, military stores, and a collection of princely presents for the chiefs of the countries he intended to visit.

The poet traveled like a king, purchasing his houses where he stopped, and having in his service a retinue of servants and horses.

Sometimes he tried his skill at poetic improvisation with the first bards of Asia. At another time he was warmly welcomed by that celebrated visionary, Lady Stanhope, who announced a great European inundation to him in terms wonderfully prophetic, and the character of deliverer which awaited him in his own country.

This voyage, which occupied sixteen months, was clouded by a heavy affliction,—the death of his daughter Julia,—which took place at Beyrout, and whose corpse was borne in sadness back to France in the same vessel on which, in her beautiful youth, she had experienced so much joy and inspired so much poetry.

The voyage had, however, one good result,—a fine book, "Le Voyage en Orient,"—a splendid work on every subject,—religion, history, politics, philosophy, poetry; and, above all, his perceptions of things, new and full of grandeur.

M. Lamartine died on the first of March, 1869, at the age of 79 years.

As a poet and as an orator, he was incontestably one of the greatest glories of France.

As an historian, his "Histoire des Girondins" contributed not a little to the revolution of 1848.

As a practical man, he displayed during his famous journeys the courage of a true man, the learning of a judge, and the aptitudes of a statesman combined.

His voice alone quieted the most violent popular storms, and his single arm at the front did, perhaps, prevent a new invasion.

After the Revolution of 1848 he lived in retirement, giving himself up to literary and historic labors, which, however, could add nothing to his renown.

HOMER AND SOCRATES.

HOMER.

It is one of the most delightful faculties of the intellectual nature of man to reproduce in himself, by means of his imagination and reflective powers, and to exhibit to others, by the fine arts and by words, the beauties of the external and material world, and the elevating sentiments and morals of the intellectual world, in the midst of both of which he finds himself placed by Providence.

Man is the reflected spirit of nature: Poetry is the wand by which all that is beautiful in nature is retraced on the soul of man, animates him, and renews and exalts him.

This is a second creation permitted by God to man to partake: thus, in his thoughts and words, a latent power develops itself,—a true and godlike power,—that creates, certainly not without elements, but with pictures and souvenirs of objects that nature had created before him; imperfect efforts from a divine impression received into the soul from nature; efforts by which we reconstruct continually the passing-away visions of the interior and exterior world; which depicts, which effaces, and which renews again their beautiful imagery.

This is why Poetry is called a "creative power."

Memory is the first element of this creative power,

because memory it is that recalls things past and vanished to our souls: thus the Muses, those symbols of inspiration, were called "Daughters of Memory" by the ancients.

Imagination is the second element, because it colors these objects when remembered, and intensifies them.

Sentiment is the third, because, at the view or remembrance of these objects resuggested to the mind or renewed in our minds, it is sensibility which makes man feel such moral and physical impressions, almost as intense, and almost as possessing, as would be the impression of the objects themselves if they were real and present before our eyes.

Judgment is the fourth element; it teaches us in what order, in what proportion, in what connection, in what just harmony we ought to combine, and how group and mingle these reminiscences, these ideals, these dreams, these sentiments, imaginary or historic, to render them most conformed to reality, to nature, to truthful similitude; in fine, that they produce on ourselves and on others an impression as perfect as if the art was truth and fact instead.

The fifth necessary element for this creation, this poetry, is the gift of expressing by words that which we see and that which we feel in ourselves; of producing outwardly that which moves us inwardly; of painting with words, or giving to words, so to speak, form and color, to give them impression, action, heart-throb, life, joy, or grief, as our own hearts are affected at the view of objects that we imagine.

Two things are necessary for this: first, that the language should be rich in itself, and strong and expressive,—without which poetry is deficient in colors

on its palette; the second, that the poet himself be an instrument humanized by sensations, very impressionable, very sensitive, very complete,—that he be wanting in no human fibre, either in his expression or in his heart; let him be a veritable living lyre, complete in all its strings; a human gamut as lengthened as nature, to the end that all things, grave and gay, sweet and sad, sorrowful or delightful, find a voice and response.

Something more yet is necessary: it is necessary that the notes of this human gamut be very sonorous, and vibrating in his own nature, to be able to communicate their tones to others; it is necessary that the interior vibrations engender emotions which express themselves audibly in strong, picturesque, glowing words,—words which engrave themselves on the mind by the energy by which they are spoken.

It is the force of the impression which creates the words for us; for the word is only the offset of the thought: if the thought strikes us strongly, the words are forcible; if it strikes only softly, the words are soft and sweet; if but feebly, the words are weak; as the thought, so the words: behold nature.

Finally, the sixth element necessary to this interior and exterior creation that is called Poetry is the musical susceptibility in the ears of the poet; because Poetry sings instead of speaking, and all song needs music to render it more tender and pathetic to our souls, more voluptuous to our senses.

If you ask me why song is a condition of Poetry, I will reply to you, because words sung are more beautiful and more expressive than words merely spoken; but, if you go further, and ask why words sung are

more impressive than words spoken, I shall reply that I do not know, and that it will be necessary to inquire of Him who made the senses, and the ear of man more voluptuously impressed by cadence, by rhythm, by measure, by melody of sounds and words, than by inharmonious sounds and words thrown together by hazard. I will reply to you, that rhythm and harmony are two mysterious laws of nature, which constitute the sovereign beauty or order in speech.

The spheres themselves move to the measure of a divine rhythm,—the stars sing, and God is not only the great Architect, the great Mathematician, the great Poet of the world, He is also the great Musician: the Creation is a song, of which He has measured the cadences, and He listens to the melody.

But a great poet (of such I am speaking) ought not only to be endowed with a vast memory, a rich imagination, a lively sensibility, a correct judgment, a vivid and lifelike expression, a musical sense harmonious and accentuated; it is necessary that he should be a special philosopher,—for wisdom is the soul and base of his song; he should be a legislator,—for he should understand the laws which govern the contracts between man and man, laws which are, to civilized society and to nations, what mortar is to edifices; he ought to be a warrior,—for he sings often of battles, the taking of cities, invasions or defenses of territory by armies; he ought to be a great hero,—for he celebrates the great exploits and the great sacrifices of heroism; he should be an historian,—for his songs are recitals; he ought to be eloquent,—for he makes his personages discuss and harangue; he ought to be a traveler,—for

he describes the earth, sea, mountains, productions, monuments, and manners of different people; he ought to know nature, animate and inanimate; geography, astronomy, navigation, agriculture, the arts, trades, even the most common in his time,—for he circles in his songs the heavens, earth, and ocean, and he takes his comparisons, his illustrations, his imagery among the paths of stars, the manœuvres of ships, in the forms and habits of animals, gentle and ferocious; sailor with sailors, shepherd with shepherds, laborer with laborers; blacksmith at his forge, a weaver with those who spin the fleece of the flocks, or who weave the linen; beggar even with beggars at the doors of huts or palaces. He ought to have a soul frank as that of an infant, tender, compassionate, and full of pity as a woman's, firm and invincible as that of a judge or old man,—for he recites the plays, the innocent ways, the fresh truthfulness of infancy, the loves of young men and beautiful maidens, their attachments, and their rendings of hearts; their tenderness, compassion, or their misery he writes with tears, and his *chef d'œuvre* is in making others weep.

He ought to be able to inspire men with pity, that most beautiful of human sympathies, because it is the most disinterested. Finally, he ought to be a religious man, and full of the presence and worship of Providence, for he speaks of heaven as often as of the earth.

His mission is to make men aspire to the invisible and superior world; to cause the name of the Supreme Being to be respected before everything else, and to fill all the desires that it excites in the mind, or in the

heart, with, if I may so express it, a presentiment of the Immortal and the Infinite, which is the atmosphere, and like the invisible element of divinity.

Such should be the complete poet,—many men in one,—a living epitome of all the gifts, all intelligence, all instincts, all wisdom, all tenderness, all the virtues, all the heroism, of a truthful soul; as complete a creation as human clay can admit.

But immediately such a man appears on earth, displacing, by his superiority, ordinary mortals, incredulity and envy will attach themselves to his steps as a shadow does to the body. Fortune, jealous of nature, forsakes him; vulgarity, incapable of understanding him, despises him, as an importunate wanderer from a commoner sphere; women, children, and young men listen to his singing in secret, and conceal it from the old people, because his songs respond to new and tender chords in their hearts; men of riper years shake their heads, they do not like to have any one take the attention thus of their wives and daughters from the cold realities of life; they call the ideas and the sentiments which these geniuses inspire "*dreams*," which turn the head and the heart of their generation; the old fear for their laws and customs, great people for their aristocracy, courtesans for their favors, rivals for their portion of glory.

Disdain, affected or real, scatters the renown of these godlike men; indigence and misery drive them from village to village, exile threatens them, and persecution points its finger at them; a child, or a dog, leads them, infirm, blind, begging from door to door, or perhaps a cell receives them and shuts them up, and people call

their genius "*ravings*," and they have to dispense even with pity.

And it is not only the ignorant who thus treat these men of letters. No; this comes from philosophers, such as Plato, who made laws, or vows of proscription, against poets. Plato was right in his anathema against poetry; for if the poet of Chios had entered Athens, the people would perhaps have dethroned the philosopher! There was more politics in one ode of Homer than in the Utopian rounds of Plato.

II.

HOMER is this ideal; this superhuman, unknown, persecuted in his time,—immortal after his disappearance from earth: listen to the history of his life.

Some learned people pretended then, and pretend even now, that he has not existed, and that his poems are the rhapsodies or fragments of poetry joined together by the rhapsodians, itinerant singers, who made their circuit of Greece and Asia Minor, improvising popular ballads. This opinion is the atheism of genius, and it refutes itself by its own absurdity. Are not a hundred Homers, then, more marvelous than one alone? The unity and equal perfection of the works, do they not attest to the unity of thought, and the one masterly hand of the workman? If the Minerva of Phidias had been broken in pieces by the

barbarians, and some one bringing the pieces, traced out one by one the mutilated, separated limbs, adjusting them perfectly one to the other, and leaving all the imprints of the same scissors from the pedestal to the last curl of the head, should I say, in contemplating all these fragments of incomparable beauty, "This statue is not of one single Phidias, it is the work of a thousand unknown workmen, who have met, by chance, to make this *chef d'œuvre* of design and execution?" No; I should recognize by the evidence of the unity of conception, the unity of the artist; and I should cry out, "It is Phidias!" as the whole world cry, "It is Homer!"

Let us pass, then, over the incredulities, vestiges of the ancient envy, which has pursued this great man even down to posterity, and let us see how he lived.

Homer was born 907* years before the birth of Christ. He was of the Greek race, whether he opened his eyes at Chios, an isle in the Grecian Archipelago, which touches Asia Minor, or was born at Smyrna, an Asiatic city, but colonized by the Greeks.

The Greeks were just emerging from their primitive period, when pastoral pursuits, the camp, attention to agriculture, and maritime pursuits, had occupied them, and were entering into the intellectual and moral period; resembling in this the snows of their mounts, Thessaly and Olympus, which roll their troubled and impetuous waters before they are calmed and clarified in their valleys.

This people, destined to occupy from so small a place

* According to the chronology on the marble at Paris.

one of the greatest places in the world of history, of intellectual pursuits, of the arts, was an aggregation of five or six races,—some European, some African, others Asiatic, as the contiguity to Europe, Asia, or Africa had mingled together in this rendezvous of the ancient world a meeting of the undecided frontiers of the three countries. Their natal germ was among the rocks of Epirus and Macedonia; but the hardihood of the mountaineer, the spirit of adventure of the sailor, the softness of the Asiatic, the religious fervor of the Egyptian, the reflective powers of the Indian, the grace of the Persian, were so well mingled in their physiognomy and nature, and in their threefold genius, that this people became, by their beauty, heroism, grace, character, at once flexible and enterprising, like a combination of all people. The forests of Europe had given them their heroic and natural manners; Egypt her priests and divinities; the Phœnicians their alphabet; the Persians and Lydians their poetry and fine arts; the Cretans their Olympus and their laws; Thrace their arms; the Hellenes their navigation and their confederation in independent tribes; the Hindoos their mysteries and their religious allegories; so that the heavens over them were a colony of all divinities, as their continent and their isles were a colony of men of all kinds and races. Their aptitudes were as diverse as their origin.

The sea of the Grecian Archipelago is the Lake Leman of the Orient; surrounded with gulfs, inlets, and streams, which insinuate themselves between the capes and indentations of land. She bathed the most picturesque and diverse shore, and most gracious surround-

ings, and seemed to have been hollowed to soften the meeting of the two continents where Byzantium seated itself upon the two rivers. Vessels multiplied like birds on the sea, navigating continually from one isle to another, and from Africa to Asia, and from Asia to Europe, like the interminglings of one family, who pay visits at springtime among their neighboring rocks.

The climate of this mountainous country and seaport is as varied as its situation, and as temperate as its latitude.

From the eternal snows of Thessaly to the perpetual summer of the valleys of Lydia, and the fresh ventilation of the isles, all the frosts, all the heat, all the changes of temperature were experienced there, and mingled, or were contrasted from time to time on the mountains, in the plains and valleys, and on the waters.

The skies there are as clear as in Egypt; the earth as fruitful as Syria; the sea now calm and winsome, now stormy and frightful, like as in the tropics. The sites and scenes of nature there are, at a short distance and in rapid groups, at once grand, beautiful, picturesque, sublime, gracious, mountainous, or marine; a gathering without limit, like the imagination of man.

Everything there was depicted in the most imposing characters, the most picturesque, the most glowing; sometimes like a hymn, sometimes a poem, sometimes an elegy, sometimes a chant, sometimes a voluptuous rhapsody; that land is the land that paints, that speaks, that sings, better than all the senses.

The murmuring sea-foam of Peloponnesus, the caps of the lightning-crowned Taurus, the sinuous gulfs of the Eubœa, the wide mouths of the Bosphorus, the mel-

ancholy bays of Asia Minor, the green isles, bluish clusters on the waters, like a floating buoy with an anchor which connects two banks.

The isle of Crete, with its hundred cities; Rhodes, which has taken its name from the rose, or has given one to it; Scyros, queen of the Cyclades; Naos, Hydra, front sentinels of continental Greece; the isle of Cyprus, large enough for two kingdoms; Chalcis, as a bridge on the Euripus, reuniting to Europe Tenedos, which opens or which shuts the Dardanelles; Lemnos, Mitylene, or Lesbos, which seem to imitate, on a small scale, the mountains, the valleys, the gorges, and the gulfs of the continent of Asia, which are seen in front; Chios, with a double terrace of flowers on its two opposite sides, bestowing its olives to Europe and its oranges to Asia; Samos, which deepens its ports and which raises its summits as high as Mount Mycale, with which she interlaces her feet; with innumerable groups of other isles yet, of which each had its people, its manners, its arts, its temples, its divinities, its mythology, its history, so renowned in the Greek family, but of which all already speak the same language and sing in the same verse. Such was Greece at the time of that incarnation of Poesie in the person of Homer. She was waiting for a historian—a national ode—the poet of its divinities, of its heroes, of its exploits—to constitute for her an ideal supremacy and celebrity in the present and in the future.

In his hymn to Apollo of Delos, god of Grecian inspiration, Homer himself describes, in some geographical verses, these groups of islands and continents, which contain all the poetry of nature.

"You have," said he to the gods, "the summits of high mountains, ethereal spots, whence sight is absorbed and lost in distance; rivers, which run to the sea; inclined promontories near the channels, and large ports. Yes, since your mother Latona, concealing herself on Mount Cynthus, gave you birth at the murmur of blue waves that the sonorous gales of winds crested on the two shores, you reign over these places and over their inhabitants; over those of Crete and of Athens; over those who people the isles of Ægina and Eubœa, celebrated for ships; Ægria, Iresia, and the maritime Peparethos; Athos, Samos of Thrace; the summits of Pelion; the wooded mountains of Ida; Imbros, with ruins of edifices at its sides; inaccessible Lemnos; Chio, the most beautiful of the isles of the Archipelago; sharp Mimas and the peaks of Coryce; Claros, which terrifies the sailor; and Esagea, of which one seeks the summit in the skies; Samos, flowing with rivulets, and Mount Mycale, the king of hills; Miletus and Cos, the abode of Merope; Gnido, kingdom of storms; Naxos and Paros, whose pebbly shores the sea whitens.

"This Delos," continued he, "where Latona, seized with the pains of childbirth, embraced the palm-tree with her arms, and pressed the soft, grassy bank,—that earth which smiled to bear her,—and immediately Delos was covered with gold, as the summit of a mountain is crowned with forests!"

It is in this isle that the Ionians (people of Smyrna), with loose garments, assemble with their wives and daughters, where, seen together in front of the temple, one would take them for immortals exempt from old age. The mind is filled in contemplating the beauty

of the men, the majestic stature and beauty of the women, their fleet ships on the seas, their marvelous riches.

Then the poet, returning upon himself, at the end of this enumeration, and addressing himself to the daughters of Delos:

"If ever," he said to them in the last stanza,—"if ever, among mortals, some unfortunate traveler lands here, and says to you, 'Young girls, who is the most inspiring of the singers who visit your isle? and to whom do you like best to listen?' reply, then, all of you, in remembrance of me, 'It is the blind man who inhabits mountainous Chios, whose songs are stamped on our remembrance above all other songs.'"

You will see in other verses of Homer himself the situation, the period, the people, the manners, the habits of the Grecians at his advent among them. We simply borrow the recital of his life from the ancient traditions and local songs, which are transmitted from mouth to mouth among men the most interested to remember him, since he has been their glory.

These traditions, marvelous as it appears, are really the erudition of the people; we give more credence to them than to learned men, who come after the lapse of ages to combat or to deny them. In the absence of written books, the history of nations is the unwritten book of their race; that which the father recounted to his son, and that the son had repeated to his children, from age to age, cannot be without foundation in truth.

By going back, from generation to generation, to the origin of the traditions of family, or of race, which increase fabulously in their course, one resembles a man

who follows the course of an unknown river,—he finishes by arriving at a source, small, without doubt, but a truthful one.

Let us tell, then, what the contemporary Greeks and the posterity of Homer said of the most ancient and most national genius of their race.

III.

THERE was, in the city of Magnesia, a Greek colony of Asia Minor, separated from Smyrna by a chain of mountains, a man originally from Thessaly, named Melanopus. He was poor, as wanderers usually are who exile themselves from their country, where they retain neither house nor paternal domain. He removed from Magnesia to another new city, not far distant, called Cymos. Melanopus was there married to a young Greek girl, as poor as himself, a daughter of one of his compatriots named Orymethes; they had an only daughter, to whom they gave the name of Critheis; he lost his wife shortly after, and, feeling himself about to die also, he bequeathed his daughter, yet an infant, to one of his friends, who was from Argos, and who bore the name of Cleanax.

The beauty of Critheis, though it brought misfortune to her, brought a great good to Greece and to the world. It seems that the most wonderful of men was not destined to know his father, as if Providence would throw a mystery round even his birth, to the end that notice

of him should begin even in his cradle. Critheis fascinated a stranger, was overtaken, and fell, her fault being evident to the eyes of the family of Cleanax. They feared to be dishonored by the presence of an illegitimate child at their fireside. They concealed the weakness of Critheis, and sent her into another Greek colony, which was populated at that period at the end of the Gulf Hermus, and was called Smyrna. Critheis, carrying within her that which covered her with shame, but which would some day render her name celebrated, received asylum at Smyrna at the house of a relative of Cleanax, a native of Bœotia, but removed to this new Greek colony; he was named Ismenias.

We do not learn if this person knew the exact circumstances of Critheis, who passed, without doubt, for a widow woman married at Cymos. However this may be, the orphan, having accompanied the wives and daughters of the city of Smyrna to the banks of the little river Meles, where they were to celebrate, in open air, a pastoral in honor of the gods, was surprised with the pains of childbirth. Her infant came into the world in the midst of a procession to the glory of divinities of whom he was to spread the worship, amid singing of hymns, under a plantain-tree, on the grass by the side of the river!

The companions of Critheis carried the young girl to Smyrna, and brought the infant, naked as it was, to the house of Ismenias. From that day the obscure river which winds between cypresses and firs surrounding the suburbs of Smyrna has borne a name equal to any river. The celebrity of the infant born there makes

it renowned even to the blades of grass upon which he was laid on coming into the world!

Tradition informs us, and the ancients record, that Orpheus, the first of the Greek poets who sung the odes to immortality, was torn in pieces by the women of Mount Rhodope (who were provoked that he held up the gods to be greater than they); that his head, separated from his body, was thrown by them into the Hebrus, a river of which the mouth is a hundred miles from Smyrna; that the river floated this head, yet full of song and harmony, to the sea, and that the waves in their turn bore it to the mouth of the river Meles; that it was carried and stopped on the grass by the very field where Critheis gave birth to her infant, as if the poet came himself to transmit his soul and his inspiration to Homer! The nightingales near his tomb, they say, sing more melodiously than elsewhere. Whether Ismenias was too poor to support both the mother and child, or whether the birth of this boy without a father had thrown a shade over the reputation of Critheis, he sent her away from his house, and she sought for herself and child an asylum and protection from door to door. There was at this time at Smyrna a man not rich, but a good man, and with a great heart, such as is often the case with those detached from the grasp of earthly things by intellectual pursuits. His name was Phemius, and he kept a school.*

They called "song" that by which one explains or expresses anything,—all that aids the imagination, the heart, the senses; all that sings in our minds,—gram-

* M. de Marcellus, Episodes littéraires de l'Orient, book ii.

mar, reading, writing, rhetoric, eloquence, poetry, music; for what the ancients meant by music was that which moved the soul more than the ear; that poetry sings, not merely recites; that music was only the art conforming verse to accent, or accent to verse. This was the reason they called the school of Phemius a musical school, because it furnished the means to express the emotions of the soul as well as spoke to the ear,—that it engrossed the mind of man.

All the salary that Phemius had, to pay for the care he took of his scholars, was not in money, but in produce, which the parents of his pupils sent him from time to time. The mountains which inclose the Gulf of Hermus, at the end of which Smyrna elevated its head, were then, as they are at present, a rich pastoral country, full of flocks and herds; women spun wool to make carpets, after the hereditary industry of Ionia.

Each child, on coming to school to Phemius, brought an entire fleece, or part of a fleece, of lamb's wool, from his father; Phemius had it spun by his servants, whitened, and prepared it ready for use, and then changed it for the necessaries of life.

Critheis, who had heard them speak of the goodness of this master of a school for children, and thinking she might be able to confide her son to him some day when he should be old enough, took him by the hand and led him to the threshold of Phemius.

He was touched by the beauty and tears of the young girl, and the tender age and helplessness of the babe; he took Critheis into his house as a servant, and permitted her to keep her child with her and nourish it.

He employed the young Magnesian in spinning the

wool that he received as the price of his lessons; he found Critheis as modest as industrious, and as skillful as she was beautiful; he became much attached to the child, whose precocious intelligence caused him to foretell, I do not know what, of honor and renown to the house to which the gods had conducted him; he proposed to Critheis to marry him, and thus give her child a father's name. The kindness and love of Phemius, and his interest in her child, touched at once the heart of the young girl, and she became the wife of the schoolmaster, and mistress of the house of which she had crossed the threshold several years before begging for help!

Phemius became more and more attached to the little Melesian. This name, that they gave familiarly to Homer, means baby of Meles, in remembrance of the bank of that river where he was born. His adopted father loved him for his mother's, and also for his own sake. Instructor and father at the same time, he lavished upon him all his heart, and all the secrets of learning. Homer, whose soul was open to receive the lessons of Phemius, and whom nature had endowed with an intelligence which enabled him to understand everything, and a memory which reproduced everything, recompensed the cares of the old man, and gratified the pride of Critheis. They considered that he would very soon, notwithstanding his tender years, be capable to teach the school himself, and some day to succeed Phemius. But the gods had destined him in his loneliness to less happiness, and to other honors,—to teach the world, and to gain an immortal name.

The child adored his father in his master, and to show his gratitude in a lasting form, he gave the name of Phemius to one of his best songs among his later poems.

IV.

PHEMIUS died; leaving for the heritage of his child his modicum of goods and his school. Critheis, deprived of the support that she had found in the tenderness of this hospitable man, who had cherished her to his very heart's core, mourned him even to death, and soon followed the old man to the tomb. Homer, then hardly more than a boy, remained alone in that house where he had received all things and lost all.

His wisdom supplied him in place of years; he continued to keep the school of Phemius, and soon made it more renowned, just as Phemius had predicted when dying.

His poems, the Iliad and Odyssey, written while teaching the children, and almost a child himself; written and expressed in language inspired by the gods, appeared to the inhabitants of Smyrna, as an oracle who verified the prognostications of his birth on the banks of their divine river Meles. Men of riper years, mothers of families, old men, even, went to hear his teachings, astonished and affected by them. Merchants trading in corn and wool, strangers that commerce or curiosity drew from all the isles of Greece and all the maritime cities of Ionia, in their ships frequenting the

port of Smyrna, heard them speak of this phenomenon. After they loaded their vessels, they would not leave without hearing one of his lectures, and they spread the renown of the young schoolmaster in their own country.

V.

One of these strangers was called Mentes: he was both owner and master of his own ship. He came to buy the cheese of Lydia to carry it to Leucadia, in the hilly isle of Lesbos. More deeply enamored with the spirit of song than the other navigators in port, he not only sought money, but wisdom and science, in all the countries he visited. Struck with Homer's superiority and genius, above all men he had ever heard in the schools or in the temples of Greece or Ionia, he formed a strong friendship with the young Melesian; he described to him the countries, the isles, the seas, the cities, the manners and customs, and the parts of divers rivers where his trade in grain, etc. led him to stop; he convinced him that the living and unlimited book of nature was the true school of all truth, of all poetry, of all wisdom; he inflamed the mind of the young man with a desire to read, with his own eyes, this heavenly book.

Homer, on whom these images and descriptions lost nothing of their power, but found an answering echo in the profound conceptions of his mind, renounced the fortune and the domestic popularity which smiled

upon him on all sides, to go to enrich his imagination and feed his mind by collecting impressions and descriptions of other parts of the earth. He closed his school, sold the house and woolen stuffs left him by Phemius, and, making his home on board the vessel of Mentes, he paid him the price of this erratic home for several years.

VI.

HOMER, in company with his friend and pilot Mentes, traveled thus during a period not known: a traveler, a sailor, a merchant, a singer, by turns, or all at once, he visited Egypt,—then the source of all light, and the original country of all the mythological divinities,—Spain, Italy, the shores of the Adriatic Sea, those of the Peloponnesian, the islands, the continents, conversing with all he met, taking lessons of their philosophy, and gathering together notes,—since lost,—descriptions, reminiscences, histories, and allegories, of which latter he constructed his poems. He was returning, poor in goods but rich in impressions, to repose at last in his own country, and reconstruct his fortune, when a disease of the eyes, caused by the sun, by study, and writing, stopped him in the isle of Ithaca, where Mentes had entered to trade. Mentes, obliged to carry his cargo to Lesbos, confided sick Homer to an inhabitant of Ithaca, who was rich, in sympathy with, and a friend of poets, named Mentor, a son of Alcinous.

Mentor lavished upon the great poet all the aids of medicine, and all the delicate attentions of hospitality. Homer, who paid with honor the debts of gratitude, soon immortalized Mentor and Alcinous by making one the oracle of all wisdom, and the other the model of the happiness of a man after an agitated life, engaged in moral pursuits, and the cultivation of his garden. He made Ithaca the scene of his poem of the Odyssey; finding there the traditions of his hero Ulysses, imprinted them on his memory, and made this little isle famous. Rest, in the house of Alcinous, the care of Mentor, the balsams and the medicines of Ithaca doctors, whose names he gave to those divinities who heal the wounds of mortals, restored him to life and to health.

Mentes, faithful to his promise, recrossed the Ægean Sea and took Homer from Ithaca. Homer traveled still some years with him. A second time struck with blindness, in the port of Colophon, he was left there by Mentes to be cured, as he had been formerly left at Ithaca; but neither an earthly abode nor arts of doctors can prevail against the intentions of Heaven. He became blind! and the tablet of nature, that he so loved to contemplate, was shut forever from his eyes!—the pictures of which, however, were bright, lively, and in striking relief in his mind and imagination. That which he saw no more outwardly, he sought within,—memory served him for all. His regret for the great luminary of day, for the view of the sea, and of the earth, and of mankind, whom he could no more see, gave something of a touching and melancholy character to the remembrances of a vanished world.

He turned his vision into himself, and depicted better that he did not trouble himself any longer to look about him.

VII.

THE first thought which came to him, after he lost all hope of being cured, was of his native land. The wounded bird seeks to shelter itself in the nest which had seen it fledged. He had himself carried to Smyrna, to the house of Phemius, and near the tomb of Critheis, his mother; he reopened there a school; but his long absence had made them forget his reputation and skill, and others had taken his place and become popular: his blindness seemed to them to be a sign of the anger of the gods. They could not believe that a man deprived of the most necessary of all the senses could teach the most sublime of arts.

His voice resounded in a vacant space! His school remained deserted! His old friends did not come around to sustain him! Poverty now obliged him to sing some popular verses from door to door, to draw from the indifference of his compatriots the bread necessary for his subsistence, and pay for the child who served to guide his steps.

Always noble and majestic in expression and attitude, in this humiliating condition of a blind beggar, he resembled a god in fabulous history, still retaining his heavenly superiority while asking alms of mortals.

Ulysses, in the character of a beggar in the Odyssey, is a remembrance of this period of his life, thus immortalized by the poet.

But whether it was that the citizens became deaf to his songs, or whether it was the mortification which drives an unfortunate man from the city where he has once been happy, which rendered the abode in Smyrna more cruel to the heart of Homer than hunger, he went out of it, to seek from city to city more compassionate listeners. He traveled on foot the plains of Hermus, to go thence to Cymos, country of his mother and of his ancestors, where he expected, without doubt, to find some remembrances of them in the old men, friends, and of the relatives of his name.

Fatigue stopped him, however, at Neotichos, a little city just coming into notice, a colony of Cymos, built at the foot of Mount Sedina, and on the borders of Hermus. As it is the custom among mendicants who hold conversations with the poorer working class more than with the rich, because the first labor in the open air, while the latter are retired in their houses or in their gardens, Homer entered into the workshop of a tanner of leather, and he there improvised the first stanzas to the sons of Cymos:

"O you who inhabit the city spread on the hill, at the foot of Mount Sedina, crowned with forests, and who drink the fresh waters of Hermus in their foaming bed, pity a wanderer who has no dwelling, nor abiding-place, welcome him to your doors, and to your hospitable fires."

The tanner, moved with compassion, and touched by the tone of this supplication sung in poetry at his

door, made Homer come in, offered him a seat in his workshop, and an asylum in his house. The wonder, of a beggar who spoke the language of the gods, spread from mouth to mouth in the village; a crowd was attracted round the door of the tanner; the principal people of the place came into the shop, and seating themselves round the blind man, they began to interrogate him, and made him recite the verses far into the night. He recited an heroic poem on the city of Thebes, dear to the Greeks, and hymns also to immortality, which filled his auditors with patriotism and piety. One's country and heaven are the two notes which resound most universally in the souls of men when gathered together. They took him for a beggar from heaven, who concealed a god under the garb of humanity! The interview was prolonged between Homer and the wise men of the city, the conversation turning upon the beautiful poetry that Orpheus and his disciples had rooted in the memory of the people. He judged them and praised them to men who were capable of understanding them. He reveled in the sublime expressions of those kingly poets. His auditors begged him to honor their city by a long sojourn; they envied the tanner for having been the first host of this great unknown, they sent presents to him, to share in the honor of the hospitality that the tanner of leather proffered the godlike singer.

VIII.

He lived at Neotichos on the proceeds of his lyre for some time. They were able to show later, in the time of Herodotus, the place where he was accustomed to sit and recite his verses, and the ancient poplar-tree, the first leaves of which fell on his head. Having satisfied the astonishment and admiration of the inhabitants, he feared that a longer stay would be importuning their hospitality; he left as poor as he arrived, having taken of them only his living.

He turned his steps towards Cymos, and composed while on the way some verses in honor of the Cymeans, to receive from them a good welcome. He passed by Larissa. At the request of the citizens he dictated an inscription in verse on a column raised in memory of a king very much loved by them. These verses are still preserved.

Arrived at the gates of Cymos, he gave his name, and made himself known as one of the descendants of the Cymoseans. Introduced into the assembly of the old men, he charmed them by his poems. Delighted himself to meet those so fond of the lyre, he made an engagement to remain in their midst, and give a lasting name to their country, if the city would only assure him of an asylum and subsistence. The old men made the engagement, and presented it to the senate, to have them ratify the contract between the citizens and him. A crowd of admirers accompanied him there. Stand-

ing before the senators, he presented his request, and then, after having sung, he retired to await their decision.

All were inclined to give Homer a support, as pay for the history and renown he promised their city. But one man arose,—one of those disingenuous men who think themselves wiser than the crowd, because they lack their enthusiasm and warm feelings. He represented that if the city engaged themselves thus to receive and support all the blind singers wandering in Ionia, she would ruin the public treasury!

The senate, not wishing to appear less knowing and less economical of the public treasury than this senator, changed their opinion and refused Homer the hospitality of their city! The president was charged to go and communicate this hard decision to the poet. He seated himself on a stone at his side, and sought to soften the refusal by speaking of the considerations of prudence and public interest which had determined the vote of the senate. Homer, saddened and angered by the hardheartedness of his countrymen, broke forth with groans and reproaches before the waiting crowd which surrounded him.

"To what a miserable state am I brought!" cried he, singing and weeping at the same time. "Have the gods abandoned me? Cradled on the knees of a tender mother in this city, I was nourished at her breast,—this city, whose boundaries are washed by the waves of the sea, and of which the sacred river Meles waters the gardens. Followed by misfortune, my eyes closed to the light of day, I come here, country of my mother, to bring the Muses,—lovely daughters of Jupiter,—and

to assure to Cymos an eternal renown, and its inhabitants refuse to hear their divine voices. Let them be disinherited from all remembrance, and may they be subject to the troubles due to those who insult misfortune and repulse the poor and needy!

"But I," replied he further,—"I shall go out with a firm heart to support, in whatever way I can, the destiny the gods made for me when they afflicted me with life. Already my impatient feet seek to draw me far from this ungrateful city."

He left, asking of the gods that Cymos should never give birth to a singer capable of leaving a legacy of credit to his country.

IX.

HOMER had himself transported to Phocæa, another Greek colony in Ionia, which became the starting-point of Marseilles. The gulf, surrounded by rocks and shaded with plantain-trees, resembles a port scalloped by Nature herself, to attract on its shores a maritime people. Poetry flourished at Phocæa more than other places, because the sea inspires reverie and poetry. There was a celebrated school of song in the city, kept by an eloquent man, but jealous and cunning, who knew Homer's genius by the accounts given by the merchants of Smyrna, neighboring city to Phocæa.

He was called Thestorides. On learning of the arrival of the poor blind man, Thestorides feigned to be

filled with a generous pity. He went immediately to him, and offered him a place at his table and under his roof, on condition that Homer should transcribe for him the poems he had chanted on his travels, and all those that the Muses would inspire in the future. Homer, constrained by his blindness and misery, consented to these hard terms of Thestorides, and sold his genius to gain his subsistence. It was then he composed the most finished of his poems,—the Iliad,—a work at once national and religious, in which the manners of Greece, the exploits of their heroes, and the mythology of their divinities are sung in a measure that no language has ever equaled.

Meanwhile Thestorides, having stored his memory with a great number of verses bought of his lodger, and fearing that the theft would be too easily discovered if he recited them as his own in Phocæa, went and established a school in the isle of Chios. There he enriched himself by singing and selling the spoils of Homer, while the true author was languishing in poverty himself at Phocæa. But it was not so much to see himself stripped of his own glory,—he was accused of taking himself that of Thestorides. Some sailors, returning from Chios, where they had heard a poem, and hearing Homer recite the same in the port of Phocæa, declared that these poems were written by a man at Chios.

At this last blow Homer, patient till then, was indignant at what seemed the derision of the gods. He wished to go and confront his calumniator at Chios. He begged the sailors who left for that isle to take him on their bark, promising to pay the price of the voyage

in poems, of which all Greeks of the humblest profession were fond. These sailors compassionated the prayer at last as a pledge of the protection of Heaven. He sang for them all the time. They deposited him under a pine-tree on the banks, from which the burs fell at night on his head. This pine-tree recalled to his memory the woods of Cymos, his country, and the ingratitude of the city to which he had gone in vain to seek his support. He expressed this in some bitter verses, which he addressed to the tree; but at last, rising, he tried to find his route to the city by feeling. The bleating of a flock of goats attracted his attention, and led him to hope he was in the neighborhood of a shepherd. The watch-dogs regarded him with suspicious looks, and growled and barked at him. The shepherd, named Glaucus, called them off, and ran himself to save the traveler from their teeth.

Touched with pity, he could not understand how a man deprived of sight could be able to go alone in this rugged country.

He took Homer by the hand and led him into his cabin; lighted a fire, prepared his frugal meal, and made the poet seat himself and partake of it with him, the dogs lying at their feet waiting their share of the repast.

Homer improvised some good advice for shepherds, to aid these vigilant guardians of flocks and herds in their management. This adventure he brought to remembrance later, and retraced in the Odyssey his own steps under the form of Ulysses, growled at and then recognized by his dog.

Imagination composes only by the light of memory. After the repast, Homer entertained the shepherd with

an account of the places, the things, the persons he had seen in his long voyages. He sang to him some beautiful parts of his poems, which depicted pastoral life, and also the life of the sailor. The shepherd, fascinated by the knowledge, the wisdom, the poetic talent of his visitor, forgot the hours as they flew. They slept at length on the same leaves.

X.

BEFORE sunrise the shepherd, leaving Homer asleep in his cabin, went to the neighboring city to recount to his master what he had done to this remarkable old man, and the hospitality he had shown him. His master reproached him with imprudence in being so taken by the fine words of a stranger. He ordered Glaucus, nevertheless, to lead his guest to Bolissus, that he might himself judge of the wonderful stranger.

Homer went with the shepherd, and charmed the master by the interview and by his verses. The shepherds gave him the education of their children to attend to. At the news of his arrival in the isle of Chios, Thestorides, trembling with fear at being confronted and confounded by the presence of the man from whom he had stolen so much honor, fled from the island, and went to conceal his name and his shame far away from there.

After having educated the children of Glaucus' master at Bolissus, Homer, more and more celebrated, went

to found a school at the seaport of Chios, the capital of the island. He gained in this stranger land all the popular favor that he had not been able to achieve at Smyrna, his native land. The young men of the island came in crowds to take lessons. He became rich enough from the presents of the fathers and mothers to give himself the comfort of a family and home. He married a daughter of the place, who preferred the divine light of genius with him to that which should gleam from his eyes.

One can judge of her by the delicious pictures of conjugal tenderness which are drawn through all his recitals. The fruits of this union were two daughters: one dying in her youth, the other married at Chios, and perpetuating his song in this isle, which became the country of his old age.

It was in the sweet leisure of his married life, as a husband and father, of Chios, that he composed the Odyssey; the poem of his old age; review of his travels; of his impressions, of his misfortunes, of his happiness, of all which he did, thought, or felt under the names dear to his heart; of all the personages who lived in his memory by their kindness and benefits to him.

Phemius, his dear master and second father, whom he raised above all mortals in the arts of song, and who, pressing his fingers on the strings of his lyre, preludes his melodious recitals. Mentes, his friend, and his pilot from sea to sea, of whom he said, "I glory in the name of Mentes, son of the glorious Anchylus; I consider the Taphians finished in the art of governing ships on the sea."

Penelope, under which name he celebrates the beauty and fidelity of a chaste wife, whom neither the seductive graces nor the gold of young aspirants, nor the tidings spread of the death of Ulysses, nor the absences, nor the misfortune, nor the frowns of her husband, could lessen her love or her sacred fidelity to the conjugal tie. Tychius, the tanner, who gave him the first welcome hospitalities at Neotichos, and whom he immortalized in passing the name to the buckler of Ajax: thus, Ajax wore a buckler similar to the round sides of a tower,—seven hides, one over the other, covered this buckler. They came from the hand of Tychius, the most skillful of the people of Neotichos in the art of tanning, cutting, and sewing leather. He did not forget even his slaves; and the faithful old Eumeus is, without doubt, the poetical remembrance of one of those old servants whose attachment and whose years incorporate themselves with the family, and who follow the prosperity and misfortunes of it as the shadow of a homestead tree increases or decreases on the threshold in springtime and in winter.

The news of his renown spread slowly but powerfully with his verses from isle to isle, from port to port, in Ionia, and in all Greece. Each ship leaving Chios carried a copy of his poems in the memory of the sailors or soldiers. Each vessel, on reaching the isle which it made its stay, gained for him admirers and disciples. He grew old in glory more than in years.

Historian of Greece as well as her poet, each city, each colony, each family of the continent of islands, begged him to give its name, exploits, or fabulous history remembrance. He was like Minos,—judge of the

living and the dead; he held the keys of the future high-priest of posterity,—the divinity that fills all hearts. Never did poetry exercise such a sovereignty on the earth before the prophets. Genius made itself more than king, it made itself a god!—the god of human immortality.

XI.

Every country of Greece wished to keep the trace of the footsteps of this poor blind man that each country had repulsed in former years. Citizens and others, sent by cities, came from them, deputations to seek him with their vessels and beg him to visit their city, full of his name. He yielded, in these his years, to these suggestions of his country. He had, without doubt, lost the companion of his life, who would have cherished him had she yet lived in the quiet enjoyment of his happy days, from which the old ought not to separate themselves by the fear of straying into the tomb.

He set out to visit a last time all Greece, country of his muse and his name. He started first towards the mountainous isle of Samos. He disembarked there on the day which they celebrate in honor of the gods. Recognized the moment he descended on the pier by one of the inhabitants who had heard of him at Chios, the news of the arrival of the poet spread instantly throughout the city. The Samians hastened to

beg him to honor their celebration by his presence. He went to the temple with the procession, arriving at the threshold at the moment they lighted the sacred fire.

"O Samians," he sang, in verse inspired by the glow of domestic fire, "children are an honor to their fathers; towers are a strength to a city; coursers are the beauty of the prairie where they bound; ships are the grace of the sea; riches are the prosperity of dwellings; chiefs and old men, seated on their thrones in public places, are the most majestic spectacle the eyes of man can contemplate; but there is nothing upon earth more august and more peaceful and pious than the dwelling of a family illuminated by the fires of the hearthstone."

The Samians, delighted by the honor that this guest did to their isle, gave him the highest place at the festival, and reconducted him, in great pomp, to the house where his bed was prepared. On the morrow, on making the tour of the city, he had them describe the sites and situations, that he might recognize with his mind what he had already seen with his eyes. He passed near a furnace where the potters of earthenware made vases and other things. He was again recognized and surrounded by the workmen. They begged of him to stop a moment in front of their workshop and sing to them some verses proper to immortalize their art. They offered him as a gift for this condescension the most beautiful of their works. Homer smiled, seated himself on an amphora, and sung to them these verses, —celebrated since then in the workshops of workers in plaster under the title of the Furnace:

THE FURNACE.

"O you who petrify plaster, and who offer a cup as salary for my verses, listen to one of my songs. I immortalize thee, O Minerva, industrious goddess,—deign to descend into the midst of these men, and lend thy skillful hand in their work. May the wares that shall go from this furnace, and those alone, all destined for the altars of the gods, be equally colored under the red stream of the bricks,—may they be hardened gradually by a fire wisely graduated, and may they become celebrated by their elegance and their solidity in all the streets and markets of Greece! finally, may they render the workmen rich, and take nothing from the eulogium of the poet!—But, if you wish to deceive me, me blind, and not give me the cups, I invoke against your furnace the flails of the gods. May the fire devour your wares, that the furnace make a terrible noise like the grinding of the teeth of a furious horse! May the groaning potter contemplate in tears his ruin, and that no one can lean down to look into the furnace without having his face scorched by the reverberating heat which consumes your vases!"

He passed the whole winter at Samos; although not obliged by indigent circumstances to sell his songs for a morsel of bread, he continued to sing from time to time in gratitude for the hospitable inhabitants of the island;—songs appropriate to the fortunes or conditions of houses visited by him in his charming and last leisure hours.

A small boy led him through the streets of the cities,

or in the avenues of the country. The memory of the Samians has cherished from father to son some of those poetic benedictions of the blind man of Chios, like the medallions that they find here and there in the sands of the shore. Homer, in remembrance of his former mendicity, carried a branch of a tree in his hands, ornamented with its leaves, after the fashion of ancient beggars. "Behold, here we are arrived," sang he to the little boy, his guide, near a vast building in which lived an opulent merchant; a house which resounded without cessation to the sound of customers and clerks. "May its doors only open to let Fortune enter, and with her serenity and leisure! May no coffer remain empty in this happy dwelling, and may the locker be always filled with fine flour; may the young wife of the son of the house, whenever she goes out, be drawn in a chariot, and may her mules be sure-footed, and return her in safety to her dwelling, where, her feet placed on a cricket inlaid with amber, she em broiders a rich pattern! As for me, I shall return to this roof only as the nightingale returns here in spring."

The little children of Samos chanted these verses a long time from door to door, in making their collections for the religious festivals, consecrated to benevolence and piety.

XII.

At the return of springtime, with the waves quieted down, and the winds softened, he recommenced his voyage towards the Athenian gulf. The sailors of the

ship which transported him had been detained by a tempest in the roadstead of the little island of Cos. Homer felt that the end of his life drew nigh. He had himself carried on shore at this isle to die more quietly in open day on the sand of the bank. His companions had made a bed under a sail very near the sea. The rich inhabitants of the city, living at a distance from the shore, informed of the presence and sickness of the poet, came down the hill to offer to him their houses, and to bring him all kinds of comforts, presents, and respectful attentions. The shepherds, the fishermen, the sailors, hastened from all sides to ask oracles of him as from the voice of the gods upon earth.

He continued to speak in this heavenly spirit with learned men, and to hold interviews with them, till he breathed his last sigh, and with the common people also, whose manners, labors, and sufferings he had so often described in his poems.

His inmost heart had passed into their memories with his songs; in rendering his soul back to God, he did not deprive the earth of it; it had become the soul of all Greece; it was destined to become that of all antiquity. After he had expired on this spot, on the banks of the running water, the lad who had served as light to his steps, his companions, the inhabitants of the city, and the fishermen of the bay, all joined to hollow a tomb in the bank at the very place where he had wished to die. They rolled there a large stone upon which they engraved these words:

"This spot covers the head of divine Homer."

Cos always kept the ashes of him to whom she had thus given the greatest hospitality. The tomb of

Homer consecrates this island, obscure till then, more even than the place of his birth, for which seven cities yet dispute. The tradition of the spot where the old blind man was buried was lost at length, in the flight of time and the vicissitudes of the isle. No rivalry of funeral pomp, monumental show, or ceremonial oblations, troubled his last sleep,—his sepulchre was in all hearts, his monument in his own poems. They show only in the isle of Chios, near the city, a bench of stone of a circular form, and shaded by a plantain-tree, which has renewed itself by its offshoots for three thousand years, which they call the school of Homer. It is there, they say, the blind man had himself conducted by his daughters, where he taught and recited his poems. From this spot we can perceive two oceans, the capes of Ionia, the snowy tops of Olympus, the golden beaches of the island, the ships as they fold their sails and enter their anchorages, or spread their sails on leaving the ports. His daughters saw these sights for him, of which the magnificence and variety might have distracted his inspirations.

Nature, cruel and yet consoling at the same time, seemed to wish to consecrate him entirely to interior objects and images by throwing a veil over his sight. Since this epoch, they say in the isle, that they attribute to blindness the gift of inspiring poetry, and that pitiless shepherds dig out the eyes of nightingales to add to the power and instinct of melody of this poor bird.

XIII.

HERE is the history of Homer. It is simple as nature. It consists in suffering and singing. This is in general the destiny of a poet. Strings not struck give out but little sound. Poetry is a cry; nothing throws it out feelingly if the heart has not been wounded. Job had not cried to God but from his degradation and his anguish.

In our day, as in ancient times, it seems as if those who are endowed with this choice gift are thus between genius and happiness, between life and immortality.

And now, is poetry worth this sacrifice? What was Homer's influence on civilization? and in what way does he merit the name of a civilizer? To reply to this question, it is sufficient to suppose, in the infancy or youth of the world, a man half savage, endowed only with the elementary instincts, animal, ferocious, which made the base of our brute nature before society, religion, and the arts had penetrated, softened, vivified, spiritualized, sanctified his heart. Suppose that to such a man, isolated in the midst of a forest and given up to his sensual appetites, a celestial spirit should teach the art of reading the characters engraven on paper, and that he should disappear from view, after having put into his hands only the poems of Homer; the savage man reads, and a new world appears before his eyes; page by page, he feels arising within him a thousand thoughts, images, sentiments, before unknown;

material as he was a moment before opening this book, he becomes an intellectual being, and soon after a moral being.

Homer reveals to him at once a superior world, the immortality of the soul, a judgment upon our actions after death, sovereign justice or expiation, and rewards according to our virtues or our crimes, from heaven or from hell; all that under the guise of fables and allegories, it is true, but all visible and transparent under these symbols, as the form under a garment which reveals it while veiling it. He will teach him next that human glory, that passion for mutual and everlasting esteem, is given to man as the instinct the nearest approaching to virtue. He will teach him patriotism in the exploits of those heroes who left their native land, who tore themselves from the arms of their mothers and wives, to go to sacrifice their blood in national expeditions, like the siege of Troy, to gain honor for their common country. He will teach him the calamities of those wars at the assaults and burning of the Trojan city. He will teach him friendship in Achilles and Patroclus; wisdom in Mentor; conjugal fidelity in Andromachus; reverence for old age in Priam, to whom Achilles gave up the body of his son Hector, weeping; horror for the outrages to the dead in reading of the corpse of Hector dragged seven times around the walls; piety in Astyanax, his son, sent into slavery by the Greeks while yet in his mother's womb; vengeance of the gods in the death of Achilles; the consequences of infidelity in Helen; contempt for treachery in the family circle by Menelaus; holiness of the law, utility of the trades, invention and beauty of the arts.

Finally, the interpretation of all the attributes of nature, each containing a moral sense, revealed in each of the phenomena of the earth, the sea, the heavens,—a sort of alphabet between God and man,—so complete and well spelled in the poems of Homer, that the moral and the material, reflecting into each other as the skies do in the waters, seemed to be but one idea, to speak but one and the same language to the mind of the godlike old blind man.

And this language, made yet more mellifluous by such rhyme, and such measure, and so full of melodious expressions, that each thought seemed to enter the soul by the ear, not only as a piece of music, but with a ravishing charm. Is it not evident that, after a long and familiar acquaintance with this book, the brutal and ferocious man would disappear, and the intellectual and moral man would have discovered itself in that barbarian by the teachings thus of the writings of Homer?

Very well. That which such a poet might have done for such a man Homer has done for every people. Hardly had death interrupted his divine music than the rhapsodies of the Homerides, by wandering singers, with ear and mind full of these poems, spread themselves in all the isles and all the cities of Greece, carrying to each admirer a mutilated fragment of his poems, and reciting them from generation to generation at the public festivals, at the religious ceremonies, at the fires alike of palaces and cottages, at schools of young children, in such a way that the whole race became a living and imperishable edition of this universal volume of the first ages of antiquity. Under Ptolemy

Philopater the Smyrneans erected temples to him, and the Argeans rendered honors sacred to his memory.

During two thousand years the spirit of one single man inspired all this part of the world. In 884 before Christ, Lycurgus sent the poems of Homer to Sparta to improve the hearts of the citizens. Then came Solon, that founder of democracy of Athens, who, more of a statesman than Plato, felt what civilizing influences were possessed by genius, and gathered together the scattered songs, as the Romans later sought to preserve the oracles of the Sibyllæ. Then came Alexander the Great, who, passionately desirous of the immortality of his compatriot, and knowing that the key of the future is in the hands of the poet, had a casket made of marvelous richness to inclose the poems of Homer, which he always placed under his pillows, that he might have good dreams. Then came the Romans, who, of all their conquests in Greece, esteemed nothing to equal the poems of Homer; and then all the poets were but the prolonged echoes of the voice of Chios. Then came the shades of barbarous ages, which shrouded the East with ignorance for nearly a thousand years, and which commenced to be dissipated only at the date when the manuscripts of Homer, found in the ashes of paganism, became again the study, the spring, and the enthusiasm of the human race, particularly as the ancient world, history, arts, trades, poetry, civilization, manners, and religion are all found in the writings of Homer; that the literary world—even the modern literary world—proceeded in part from him, and that before this first and this last of inspired singers no other man, be he who he might, could give himself the name

of a poet. To ask if such a man could count in the ranks of civilization of the human race is to ask whether genius lightens or obscures the world. It is to renew the blasphemies of Plato; it is to drive poets from the civilized world; it is to mutilate humanity in its most sublime organ,—the organ of the infinite; it is to return to God the most powerful faculties, lest they should offend jealous eyes, and that they would make the real world too obscure or too small compared to the splendor of imagination and the grandeur of nature.

SOCRATES.

EVERYBODY knows this name, synonymous with wisdom. A small number know his doctrines; none know his life; only his conversations and his death. He was not a prophet; he was not a revealer; he was not a founder of a religion or sect; he did not speak to man in the name of God; he imposed no creed upon them; he did not envelop himself in mysteries; he promulgated no oracles; he made no prodigies; he was a man; he submitted to all human laws, even to their feebleness and doubt; but he saw well, he spoke well, he died well; that is to say, he accomplished simply, in all his simplicity and all his grandeur, the rôle that Providence imposes upon all men here below, viz., to think justly, live honorably, die hopefully.

Such was Socrates, the purest incarnation of good sense and practical philosophy that Greece, his country, has shown to antiquity.

II.

WE can say but little of his life. To live, for him, was to think. We shall recount here only his death,—that most beautiful act of his life; and we shall recount

it in the language in which we ought to memorize the things of immortality; that is to say, in poetry. Our readers will find, perhaps, some changes unforeseen, but permitted to the aridity of recitals in prose in this epic and philosophic poem composed by us at an age when one sings before he reasons. At twenty the heart speaks in hymns. That was our age when we wrote the death of Socrates.

III.

SOCRATES was of Athens, capital, politically, learnedly, artistically, of that Greece which was then eminently the centre of literature and fine arts. He was the son of a poor sculptor and a midwife. It is assumed that these two professions which supported the family gave him, with the first impressions of his infancy, the first ebullitions of his genius. As his father, the sculptor, adored what was beautiful, sought it, reproduced it in his soul, and, as an artisan, reproduced it in the stone; as his mother assisted man to be born to the light of day, and brought him to face real life,—so young Socrates had more hardships and more merit than another man in refining his nature, and to sculpture in himself that beautiful ideal that was the passion and the labor of his life. Nature had not given him, in forming him, any of those characteristics or corporal graces with which those favorites of Providence are endowed, who bear on their exterior the signs of that radiant beauty and noble virtue of the soul which

breaks through the envelope of the senses. He was small in stature, of a heavy make; he had high shoulders, as large as those of the laborer who carried the blocks of marble into the studio of his father; his neck was short and thick; his head round, and not high or oval; the mouth continually open to laugh; thick, sensual lips; a turned-up nose; cross-eyed; a rough forehead, very prominent and badly shaped. All this face, although, above all, intelligent in its general expression, announced carnal instincts and gross appetites, rather than the spiritual aspirations of a man of thought. It was from this unworthy, rebellious, and heavy form that it was necessary to bring out the purest moral beauty, and from this the most spiritual image of virtue was to emanate that had ever ravished the eyes of ancient Greece. This was the lifework of Socrates. He said to himself, looking at the blocks of stone hewn out by his father: "As beauty goes out from there, I will make it go out of me." He said to himself, on hearing his mother relate the sufferings of mothers whom she had accouched during the day: "Since the body of man is born with so much pain and effort, I will spare no efforts or pains to make to be born in me an intellectual and moral man for truth and virtue."

IV.

SOCRATES learned the art of his father, and earned his living in the studio. Only that the father was merely an artisan, while the son became immediately an

artist: the ideal and exquisite style of beauty which he carried with him shone out immediately under his hand in forms, attitudes, and faces more perfect than the works of his father.

"They show," said Xenophon, his disciple and historian, "a group of three veiled Graces, sculptured with so much beauty that it would support with little inferiority to be beside the most divine statue of Phidias." The Athenians decorated with it the portico of the Parthenon, *chef d'œuvre* of architecture, and which contained only *chefs d'œuvre.*

V.

But Socrates aspired secretly to mould souls rather than stones. He gave to his profession what was strictly necessary for the support of his family, and employed all the surplus time in reflection, study, and in frequenting schools of philosophy and eloquence that an innumerable cloud of rhetoricians and philosophers, some wise, others chimerical and perverting, were holding at that time in all parts of Athens. With a genius eminently sincere and critical, Socrates discerned promptly what was true and what was false in these doctrines. He incorporated in himself the good, and railed at the bad. He became the terror and the flail of sophists, those charlatans in knowledge. He would not admit one of their affirmations on their word, but demanded their reason for all: and from interrogation to interrogation embarrassing them in their answers, and forcing

them quickly to contradict themselves, he made them the ridicule of the audience, and retired himself, happy at having forewarned the minds of their disciples against their reveries and their subtilties. Full of respect, on the contrary, for all truly learned men, he seated himself like a little child at the feet of Anaxagoras. He delighted to hear him speak of divinity, of justice, of law, of the immortality, that certitude of hope. Socrates went out from these lessons with contempt for passing things, which were not in sympathy with eternal hopes. He considered himself as a traveler, who makes a halt in the stopping-place of earth, but who will not interest himself in aught of the ornaments around him, knowing that on the morrow when he departs he cannot carry them with him. He refreshed and purified himself from the soiling of earth, only to appear sooner respectfully before God.

VI.

But not contented with perfecting himself, Socrates was imbued with that passion more disinterested and more noble yet, that of perpetuating others. He employed himself in instructing, correcting, and improving his fellow-citizens all the time he could spare from his domestic occupations; often, indeed, his wife had reason to groan at his forgetting the necessities of his own fireside for meditative speculations, in which he sometimes remained as if inanimate, his head within

his hands; sometimes for whole days for philosophical conversations with the first who came seeking for knowledge. Insensibly, the profound justice of his answers, the freshness of his ideas, the effective, unexpected simplicity of his demonstrations, the commonest even of the images or parables he drew from the most common trades, to raise in the minds of his interlocutors the most sublime conceptions, as a goldsmith makes use of earthy powders to polish the diamond, attracted around Socrates a crowd of disciples.

Athens was a republic, free, rich, idle, loving doctrines, controversies, sects, truths, sophistries, dreams; even its government, which held its sessions in the public place, was only a perpetual discussion of the citizens between themselves upon politics, law, religion, nature, God.

In this beautiful climate, where man lives in the open air, the spacious porticos of the temples, the public gardens, the studios of artists, the open shops of the tradesman, the streets, places, markets, were also academies and schools, where each could discourse with all the others, and where the most eloquent, the most corrupt, or the most learned, drew away crowds of auditors from his rival. Unceasing conversation was, in reality, the particular institution of Athens. It supplied what the press gives us now, since the discovery of printing, with this difference, however, that the press speaks to one by one, in isolated readings, without engaging in dialogues or reply, while conversation outdoors in Athens was changing constantly, in animated dialogues, and attracted, by sects or schools, those unoccupied, and the disciples crowded around the lec-

turer the most interesting. This was Socrates: although speaking at all times and on every subject, he wrote nothing; but his teachings were in the form of dialogues with his audience; and, after his death, Plato and Xenophon wrote from memory, and in the same form of dialogue, all the doctrines they had heard and noted during the life of their master.

VII.

MEANWHILE Socrates, who was, above all, a man for duty and order, neglected none of the functions of civil life,—soldier, citizen, magistrate, statesman,—under a pretext of contempt for earthly things, to contemplate exclusively those of a higher nature.

He understood, and he wished to show by his example, that to serve man well is to serve God well, and that the defense and the government of his country are obligatory upon the free citizen of a republic. His conscience, the principal sense, because it is the sense of duty, was so just, so strong, so perfect, that it appeared like a voice speaking physically in his chest; so he called it in good faith his "oracle," or his "good genius."

This conscience dictated to him to be a hero on due occasion during the wars of his country, and so he became one.

VIII.

At the siege of Patidea, young Alcibiades had been made prisoner by the enemy: Socrates, with a handful of Athenians, threw himself into the conflict, dispersed the victors who guarded their prisoner, and restored Alcibiades, detained at the price of his blood.

At his return, the Athenians having awarded the prize of valor to him, he proclaimed Alcibiades more brave than he, because he was younger and more beautiful than he, and therefore in exposing himself he risked more than he!

At the battle of Delium, in Bœotia, the vanquished Athenians were on the point of being lost, totally, by the fault or by the treachery of their generals, who had been capriciously chosen by demagogues, when Socrates, precipitating himself with a reserved corps, gathered the veterans around him, repulsed the enemy, and made them fall back, taking another of his students, Xenophon, from the field of battle, and carrying him into the camp on his shoulders.

At the restoration of peace he returned to his studies and his disciples. The heroism that he had manifested in the army, his disinterestedness and indifference to the honors, even of military glory, which he showed by returning to his profession, designated him for the suffrages of the republic for the chief magistracy in the gift of the people.

He there exhibited virtues as rare and different in political life as those of war; clear-sighted justice, im-

partiality, moderation, inflexible resistance to entreaties, to passion, to popular anger.

The admirals of Athens, not having been able, after a naval battle, to give burial to the dead citizens, were unjustly condemned by the people to be gibbeted for it. Their life or their death depended on the vote of Socrates, who that day presided over the senate. His colleagues, intimidated by the cries and by the arms of the multitude, had consented to the execution of the generals to save their own. Socrates offered his to save the innocent! He triumphed over the anger of the Athenians, who dared not to violate before him the existing laws. But from this day the people ceased to like him, and the demagogues never pardoned him afterwards, because he had prevented them from committing a crime; his death, in the hearts of his enemies, dates from this refusal.

IX.

CALUMNY now commenced to attach itself to his name; and the poet Aristophanes, the Beaumarchais of Athens, amused the people at his expense in a comedy of personalities called "The Clouds." Socrates is represented in this comedy to the eyes of the multitude as one awakened from a dream, suspended between heaven and earth, and questioning the oracles floating and intangible, who replied to him from the midst of fogs. This was the vengeance of commonplace utility upon mind and thought, of prejudice upon wisdom.

Aristophanes, a vile admirer of foolish sayings, and the superstitions cherished by the ignorance of the vulgar horde, excited at the same time the ridicule and the anger of the people against the wisest of the Athenians: ridicule, in depicting Socrates as elevating himself above the head of the crowd; their anger, by accusing him of seeking in the heavens for a God more immaterial than the gods of flesh they had forged for themselves with the most abject credulity. Aristophanes was thus the first murderer of Socrates. This Camille Desmoulins of Athens, on delivering the sage up to ridicule, delivered him in advance to the scaffold; when one wishes to kill the victim, one commences by taking away his self-respect. The rage of the lower orders commences always with the laughter of the demagogue.

X.

It was not the philosophy of Socrates alone that was his real crime; it was his political creed. They accused him of impiety towards the divinities of the country, only to mask under a sacred pretext the hatred they had for him for another cause. The republic of Athens was divided perpetually into two parties. The friends of a wise liberty, having for limit and guarantee just laws, and the most pure and virtuous citizens of the republic for magistrates, composed the first of these parties; anarchists, radicals, demagogues, sycophants, composed the second. This was the party which stirred Athens up continually. Socrates abhorred it. He

disguised neither his contempt for an ignorant and turbulent demagogue, nor his indignation against the corruption of the republic. He said loudly that the head ought to govern the members of the state, as in the human body; that intelligence, morality, virtue, were indispensable conditions for the admission of citizens into public assemblies, and into the government of the republic; that to draw the magistrates by lot was to deliver the republic to chance; it was necessary to decide upon them with great discernment, and after proofs and pledges of their probity and their capacity.

In a word, he was an advocate of popular suffrage in many respects in the nomination of men invested with public functions. He did not wish the blind and often iniquitous aristocracy of rank or riches, but the divine and personal aristocracy of intelligence and virtue. These opinions, although so wise, were at this time so much the more suspected at Athens, as the republic had but just emerged from the yoke of the Thirty Tyrants; and that to demand conditions for superiority and order of a people intoxicated with recognized liberty, was almost in the eyes of demagogues to appear to regret tyranny. Socrates had braved it to its face while it raised its head, and now that it was overthrown, he had become as odious to the agitators of the populace of Athens as he had been formidable to tyrants.

He shared the fate of all just men in all ages: proscribed by excessive interest in politics, because his conscience prohibited him from participating in unjust acts to the lower classes, as well as those of the higher classes. They sought means to rid themselves of a

man whose moderation retarded the popularity of the demagogues, as it had offended a short time before the redoubtable Thirty Tyrants.

XI.

A CERTAIN Anytus, a rich citizen of Athens, who had conspired in the overthrow of tyranny, and had gained by that the favor of the people, endeavored cowardly to preserve this favor by the most abject condescensions to the caprices and prejudices of the multitude. The multitude like superstitions because they are the servile acts of the mind, and the sanctimonious ones, of ignorance. Anytus and his friends resolved to accuse Socrates of blasphemy against the idols, those divinities of the crowd.

An infamous poet, named Meletus, a former disciple of Socrates, but now become his enemy by that base envy which cannot pardon the glory of those to whose popularity they cannot attain, charged himself to make the accusation against his old master. Meletus was one of those men who sanctify their spite in the eyes of the people by attributing it to a devoted zeal for the cause of God. They thus stamp easily on their passion the sacred character of that cause, and place their personal revenges in the rank of holy things. They calumniate, they outrage, they denounce, they strike those inimical to them in the name of God. The superstitious in good faith admire them, and hold them free from per-

secution as pity itself. Such was Meletus to the Athenians. He had written bad books, but he constituted himself the avenger of the old faith: he had clients in heaven. The people dared not to despise him, for fear of contemning in him the gods.

XII.

THIS young man accused Socrates of introducing beliefs, divinities, impieties, into the minds of the young! Philosophy was suspected by the people because it replied openly to the mysteries, as light alone is necessary to cause shadows to be manifested. Socrates would not defend himself. He had not committed impieties but in thought, and although his thoughts were raised above the miserable symbols adored by the Greeks, he had never insulted the worship of his fellow-citizens, feeling that the adoration of God was in itself so sacred, it was not necessary to afflict it even where it was mistaken or deceived itself. He had even pushed his respect and condescension for the lawful religion of his country too far for a philosopher, in following (says Xenophon) all the rites of popular religion, and in offering sacrifices to the gods of Olympus in his house and in the temples. He found himself before the judges with a clear conscience and incorruptible.

"If you send me away absolved, on condition that I cease to speak as a philosopher, I shall say to you, with-

out hesitation, 'Athenians, I honor and love you, but I shall obey God sooner than you.'"

XIII.

His judges, numbering five hundred and fifty-six, were divided in opinion. Socrates was condemned by a majority of but three votes by the party of demagogues joined to a party of fanatics. The Athenian law in such cases authorized the condemned to redeem his life by exile or by a ransom, to which he was held to condemn himself on being found guilty. Socrates was full of pleasantry, even at the close of life and with death.

"Athenians," said he, with that insidious irony, but bitter, which gave the force and also the sting to his discourses (for irony wounds in convincing),—"Athenians, for having devoted my entire life to the service of my country and to her improvement, I condemn myself to be nourished the rest of my days in the Prytaneum at the expense of the republic." His judges, provoked by this speech, carried the sentence of death by a large majority. "This is no misfortune," said he, after having heard his sentence; "there is no misfortune to a religious man either during life or after death. God never forsakes him. They wish my death. I feel no resentment against the people, nor against the judges. They will continue to live. I go to die. God alone knows which is the best state,—theirs or mine."

XIV.

His sentence was that he should drink hemlock, a poisonous beverage, which caused death under the form of sleep. The laws prohibited putting a criminal to death before the return of a vessel which was sent annually to the island of Delos to carry tribute to the temple of Apollo. Socrates passed his time in interviews with his friends. We will present now the last of these days, and his farewell interviews, preserved by Plato, of which we made some time since a poem.

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES.

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM.

The morning sun, over Hymettus' top,
The ridge of temple Theseus gilded up,
Shedding its rays upon the Parthenon,
Gliding furtive to the prisoner' lone.
Upon the sea a golden stern now gleams;
Wafted to Pireus come its holy hymns;
This was the ship, whose fatal drawing nigh
Marked their last day to those condemned to die!
But life could not be taken, so said law,
While the sweet sun illumed Ionia's shore?

For fear its rays, for living eyes decreed,
Should be profaned by falling on the dead!
Or the condemned, in closing his sad sight,
Twice saddened, bid adieu to life and light.
Thus he, exiled to where his fathers lie,
Must go before Aurora gilds the sky.

While waiting now for Sophronica's son,
Some mourning friends beneath the porches ran,
His wife now there (with son upon her knee,
Whose little hands played with the bolts in glee),
Accused the jailer of his tardiness,
Striking her head against the door's hard brass.
The crowd, caring but little for her tears,
Wonder, in passing, what sad woe she fears;
Then, taking up again their course, suspended,
Through the long area, by large groups attended,
Repeat to them the rumors they had known,—
Of gods blasphemed and altars overthrown,—
Of a new worship, ruinous to youth,—
A nameless God, stranger to Greece and truth.
"It was a maniac!—a monster! mad!
A new Orestes blinded by some god!
That, meeting justice, was to undergo
The penalty sinners to heaven owe."
Oh, Socrates! 'twas thou in irons thrown,
For justice and for truth thy life lay down!

The noisy prison-hinges turned at last;
His friends, with slow step, eyes cast down, all passed,
Then Socrates said, glancing, with a smile,
And pointing to the ship near Delos isle,

"Look at that ship there decked with flowers,
The sacred ship, blest Theorie, appears!
Salute it, friends," he said, "it is the ship of death!

"My soul will enter port like it, beneath;
And, meanwhile, let us talk:—this day of days,
In our sweet interviews, should great enthusiasm raise;
Throw not our festive moments to the wind,
But Heaven's hallowed gifts use to the end;
The happy ship, its final port at hand,
Doth not its course suspend at sight of land,—
But, crowned with flowers, to the winds all sail,
It nears the port with songs, chanting, All Hail!

"The Swan, the poets say, at dying hour
Her plaints with sweetest melody will pour.
My friends, believe it not: melodious bird,
She hath sublimer gift, by God endued.
You come my body to the tomb to bring,
I, like the Swan, because I die, can sing!"

At these words, sobs, under the arch, abound;
In smaller circle drew his friends around:
One said, "Since you must die, too soon, ah me!
O speak of hope and immortality!"
Said he, "I will, but first send home your wives,
Their stifled sobs soften too much our lives:
The tomb's last terror one should never own,
But enter bravely to a world unknown.

"You know, my friends, that from my youth and oft
An unknown Genie bore me up aloft,

Of future worlds discoursing to me laws,—
Were these the teachings of the Great First Cause?
His power embracing me with secret love?
The future's echo? muse of poesie above?
I know not: spirits which to me then spoke,
Now that I near my end with rapid stroke,
In accents better learned, speak and console,
I recognize the all-divine parole.

"Be it, that hearts thus freed from earthly noise,
In silence with the Infinite, gain poise,—
Or, like Swan power, invisible to see,
At death redouble touching harmony,—
Be it, still more, forgetting that I die,
My soul suspended o'er futurity,
Hears better the sweet sounds from other worlds;
Like mariner, who, his sails swiftly furled,
Nearing his home and long-desired land,
The voices better hears of the loved band,—
These friends, invisible, are now around,
And ever in my ear voices resound,
And some, too, in my voice speak now to-day:
Friends! listen, then! it is not I, but they."

His brow, calm and serene, eye with hope lit,
Now Socrates made signs for all to sit:
At the mute sign, then quickly they obeyed,
And silently sat down at the bed's side.
Symmias covered with his scarf his eyes,—
Criton, with pensive eye, raised to the skies,—
Cebés a saddened face bent down the while;
But Anaxagoras looked with smile,

Seemed envying Socrates his parting breath,
Laughing at fortune and defying death!
Folding his arms, the servant of the "Onze,"
His back supported by the door of bronze,
By doubt and pity alternately torn,
Murmured, but soft, "What good hath virtue borne!"
Phedon mourned less the sage than a friend's grace,
And with disheveled hair veiled his fine face;
Near his dear, dying master's feet he sat,
On the bent knees leant but a son's light weight,
Raised his blurred eyes on him still to adore,
Blushing to weep, yet weeping all the more.

Now pain came over the Philosopher,
But did not change expression nor color;
Looking afar,—he seemed as if he read,—
His mouth with kingly smile was overspread;
And opened—half, seemed ready to narrate
What from the Unseen he could aggregate.

Life's autumn breeze had flowered his hair,
And like a pale crown now it clustered there;
And as the morning air freshly o'erspread,
It scattered here and there a silver thread,
And o'er his brow, behold, a soul is traced!
Sublimest thought now clearly is prefaced;
So, o'er the alabaster and the shining brass,
The dying rays of altar-lamp repass;
And by veiled radiance are betrayed still more,
As luminous reflections from them pour.

As we gaze fixedly on a ship that parts,
So fixed their look—more yearning were their hearts;

When his eyes closed, and he but just respired,
His friends, in sympathy, their breath inspired!
They looked on him, the last sad time in gloom,
That voice would soon be silenced in the tomb!

As the wave parts to soft Æolian breeze,
So their poor troubled souls his last words seize;
From heaven to them was soon recalled his glance;
And he, as was his wont, smiled in advance:
"You weep, my friends!—you weep! when my freed soul,
Like the pure incense that the priests oft dole,
Forever free from this vile body's weight,
Hies to its God! and, in holy delight,
Greets the pure life, of which such glimpses show!
And, longing, seeks the truth divine to know!
What worth to live if we are not to die?
For justice, suffering, then, why wrought I?
Why fear this death, that we should call the life,
And why, with earthly tendencies in strife,
My soul with sense has fought to latest breath?
What solace, friends, hath virtue without death?
It is the combat's prize!—celestial crown
The Holy Judge bestows life's race to own!
The voice of God, recalling us to Him!
Friends, let us bless it,—I love much the theme,—
Oh, I could spend a life discussing this!
Repeating over the celestial bliss!

"But gods preserve me, nor prolong my course!
They call, devoted slave; I hear their voice!

"Now, if you love me, as at a gay feast
Pour perfumes, friends, upon your heads; at least
Suspend an offering on the prison wall,—
With green festoons wreathing the porch and hall:
As a young bride, surrounded by a crowd
Strewing fresh flowers to her womanhood,
To nuptial joys is guided from the bath,
Thus lead me, friends, into the arms of death!

"What is't to die?—to sunder life's poor knot,
Adulterous tie with earth,—the soul's base lot,—
A vile clog, gladly at the tomb derange.
To die is not to cease,—it is to change.
While he lives, clogged by this poor body's caress,
Man towards the good and true but feebly draws,—
By his vile needs arrested in his course,
He loses Truth, or seeks her with less force;
But he who, nearing that goal he would win,
Has glorious suns of day eternal seen,—
As rays of even mount into the sky,—
Exiled Earth's bosom, seek Heaven's galaxy,—
He finds in nectars that the gods unite
The state called death, commences his delight.

"To die to suffer is,—an evil this?
Friends, what know we, but that a moment is
By us made consecrate,—a sacrifice?
The fainting body in short anguish lies:
From things untoward oft has sprung much good,—
Summer from Winter, Day from Night issued;
And God himself hath wove the eternal chain,
For we to life enter in peril, pain.

So is this death, though it may dreaded be,
But a new birth to immortality.
Who for us may death's dark abyss then sound?
The gods their lips have closed—silence profound.
Who knows if in their hands, ready to seize,
The soul uncertain falls to pain or ease?
I, living, know not, thinking in suspense,
Sweet mystery is held in this silence.
That the indulgent gods, in mute severity,
Have even to our death concealed deep joy!
Wounding our hearts with such celestial arms,
That joy, thus veiled by tears, the greater charms."

Incredulous Cebés at these words smiled.
"I shall soon know," then Socrates replied.
"The glad salute that man gives to the light,
When golden rays fall first upon his sight,—
The air most sweet upon the tuneful lyre,—
Delicious perfume from the chalice pure,—
The savor of the kiss when lovers' lips
The dew of their young love, each rapturous, sips,—
Are less sweet than the ecstatic, heavenly thrill
Of virtuous man when franchised by death's will.
Whilst gathered here below, his ashes are
Borne from himself,—for them forgets to care,—
Nor had a last adieu the world allowed,
The feeling world so worthless before God."

* * * * * * * *

He stopped,—then Cebés broke the silence up:
"The gods preserve me from offending Hope!—
Divinity assimilating Love,—
Who our eyes would bind to lead above!

But since she draws thee from us and these shores,
And we, alas! now list thy final laws,
To teach me, O my Master! not wound thee,
Let me speak out and an inquirer be!"
Then Socrates kindly inclined his head,
And Cebés in these words his queries made:
"Thou saidst the soul should live beyond the tomb:
How so, if but a dying candle's gloom?
If, when the flame consumes the sentient frame,—
Say, when the candle's burnt, oh, where's the flame?
The candle lost, also is lost the light,
And all returns at once to a stern night.
If soul to sense is what unto the lyre
Is harmony, that our hands inspire,
When time or usage has depraved the wood,—
When broken chords all sweeter sounds preclude,—
The lyre, broken, shattered, and extant,
And crushed by foot of the young Baccanante,—
What of its sounds divine and pure and fresh?
With lyre they will die,—the soul with flesh?"
The sages now, to solve this mystery,
Looked down, and thought upon it pensively;
They sought from each reply, but found it not,
And speaking each to other, murmured out,
"No more the lyre, no more the harmony."
And Socrates seemed waiting his Genie!
Leaning his chin one of his hands upon,
The other stroked the forehead of Phedon;
Along his ivory neck adown it strayed,
And with the white hair it caressing played;
Detaching with his finger one long tress,
As even to the ground the ringlets dress,

Made o'er his knee the soft and white wave float,
And all unconscious smoothed the white threads out;
Then spoke thus, playing, like an old divine,
Who mingles wisdom with the festive wine:

"My friends, the soul is no uncertain flame,
The candle of our senses to illume,—
It is the eye immortal,—this life sees
Born, grown, then lessen, reborn as it flees;
And which, apart from self, with no weak strife,
Eclipses, rules this candle of our life;
As mortal eyes in great obscurity
Preserve their sight, while losing brilliancy.

"The soul is not to sense what to the lyre
Is harmony, which our hands inspire,—
But finger all divine, which makes it thrill
The ear which hears its sounds at will.
Attentive auditor,—genius unseen,—
Which judges, rules, and orders sounds terrene;
Which forms from discords, shocking to the ear,
Concerts for gods, all ravishing to hear!
The lyre broken, exhaling no refrain
O'er mute débris, *the ear still forms the strain.*
Art satisfied, Cebés?" "I am; and press
Thy last words to my heart,—forever bless,
That Socrates immortal is; and now,
Oh, let us talk of God,—of heaven, too!"

Already was the sun upon the hill;
Its rays glancing on wave, and plain, and rill,
Seemed bidding to the world a kind adieu,
The bosom of their God to seek anew.

The flocks descended from Mount Taygetus,—
Shadows already slept on Hymettus,—
Cytheron seemed to swim in seas of gold,—
The errant fisherman now nears the wold,
Or, stopping off the shore, suspends travail,
And, singing, folds his lowered sail.
The flute on land, and song upon the sea,
Come to us but sighs of airs that be;
And come to mingle with the funeral sobs
As sunset ray the evening shadow robs.

"Haste, friends! 'tis time to bathe apace,—
Slaves, turn the water in the brazen vase:
The victim offered God should be made pure.'
Then plunged,—the waters sounded a murmur:
As, at the altar, the high-priests dispose,
He dips his hand into the stream that flows,
And three times his high forehead laves,—
And three times o'er his breast trickle the waves;
Then with a purple cloth the waters dried,
Perfumed his hair, and in these words replied:

"God we forget, adoring much his traces!
Forbid, Apollo, I should slight the Graces,—
Hebe, restoring life to Tambris,—
Cupid's arch quiver,—scarf of sweet Iris,—
Nor Venus' brilliant girdle, above all,
With sympathetic knot, which chains the whole,—
Nor heavenly Saturn,—nor great Jupiter,—
Nor deities of heaven, earth, and air,
Peopling Olympus or Elysium,
Phases of God, and deified by some,—

Initial characters in Nature writ,—
Shadows by God spread over human wit;
By these divine cognomens we are won,
As in Aurora we salute the Sun.

"We shall perhaps find that these gods, so vaunted,
This Hell and Heaven by the lyre chanted,
Not merely are a dream, wrought by man's spirit,
But rounds upon the ladder infinite,
Which reunite the stars diverse,
Of beings scattered in this universe.
Perhaps, indeed, to this immense expanse,
From each who dies a soul is exhaled hence!
That these bright stars over our heads in state,
Are brilliant suns and places animate!
That ocean striking its tremendous shores
With groaning floods, some soul, irate, outpours!
In clouds, in blue becalmed that swing,
A spirit floats along on azure wing!
That Day an eye is, which diffuses light!
And night a beauty, veiling from all sight!
That heaven, air, earth, things great and small,
Hold each a mind, all live, and God in all!
But do you think, friends, my voice can efface
From hence all these gods that in thought have place
Commingling in Nature and in depths of Heaven
A mystery, something obscure, is woven,
That our necessity, our reason, will evole,
That points to Faith alone,—eye of the soul!

"A life! eternity! a symphonyme!
Infinity, and mighty unity supreme!

Not to be named to sense, impalpable,—
Its attribute, to be unalterable!—
In space, in time, the future, present, past,—
Descending, mounting, we arrive at last,
To find much that we see, presence divine!
That much we hear is his essence,—in fine,
His force, love, truth, creating thus all good,
God o'er all Gods! the only God! my God!"

While speaking, noises sounded near the cell.
He waited, then, some one the cause to tell;
Turning our eyes towards the Occident,
Alas! the orb of day had finished its descent!

Veiling his eyes, the servant of the eleven,
In a bronze cup, handed the poison then;
And Socrates received it, calm and bland,
And raised it, as gift sacred, in his hand;
Without suspending the discourse commenced,
Before he swallowed it a thought dispensed:

"Upon the vase's border, and round sides,
Which bears the liquid, for whom death abides,
The artist cast, under a wreath of flame,
The soul's true symbol, Psyche, and her fame.
And, emblem clear of immortality,
A Butterfly, sculptured in ivory,
With greedy bill reaching the deadly juice,
His spreading wings a handle to the vase.

"Here Psyche, by her friends betrothed to Love,
Quitted ere sunrise her abode to rove.

And now with funeral pomp surrounded close,
Mourning, she sought this beatific spouse;
Seated alone, weeps, mourns her dreadful life,
Waits in a desert to be made his wife.

"Now feeling for her ills, the light Zephyr,
Inspired by Heaven with humane desire,
The tears from off her eyes wiped with his sighs,
And raised her, sleeping, upward to the skies.
Her white brow on his shoulder now remained,
And locks, by kisses of Æolus fanned;
But Zephyr, sinking under his sweet load,
Formed with his arms a bed in tender mode,
Bathed her long lashes with his burning breath,
Then, jealous, rendered up to Love his wealth.
Then Cupid, on sweet roses laid to rest,
The beauteous head of trembling Psyche pressed;
Who, fearing, could not then herself defend,
But took the kisses she dared not to end.
For the celestial spouse, deceiving her young love,
The nuptial couch fled when day broke above!

"One other side: by soft desire now swayed,
In nightly dishabille, demi-arrayed,
One hand a lamp, the other a poniard took,
Psyche, alas! love risking, for a look
Of him, who, trembling, slept, nor would be heard,—
Inclining on one foot, when near the bed,
Her Cupid recognized,—gave sudden shriek,
And the lamp trembled in her hand, now weak;
Then a drop spattered of the burning oil,—
One drop, that from the lamp, by chance, did fall,

And fell upon the breast of sleeping Love!
Impatient Cupid wakened, quick to move,
Regards the poniard and the drop,—then flies,
Indignant, to his own celestial skies:
A striking warning to the curious, to fear
Profaning gods, by seeing them too near!

"Then, next: the maiden wandering about,
Weeping her lover more than her sad fate;
Cupid, touched by her woe, quick to relent,
Pardoned her fault, and happy Psyche went
To Olympus' mount with her celestial lord,
And, drinking from his lips divinest word,
All timidly towards the skies advanced,
When Venus, smiling, on her beauty glanced,
And thus by virtue was she deified,
And in Elysium with the gods she vied."

Then Socrates the vase raised in his hands:
"First make," he said, "the Lord of human bands,
And immortality, an offering!"
The chalice towards the earth then just leaning,
As if a precious nectar he would save,
An offering of two drops he to Him gave;
Then to his open lips the beverage placed,
And slowly drank it, without change of face,
As, leaving loath the banquet-hall, a guest,
From cup of gold, drinks up the little rest;
And more to relish the last juice he sips,
Puts drop by drop only into his lips;
Then on his death-bed slowly laid him down,
And took up the discourse in cheerful tone:

"Hoping in God, and an immortal soul,
We'll feed love's sacred flame till to the goal;
In God and mortal's love, a sacred tie,
Nor grief nor fear should at its altar lie:
When comes the signal of deliverance,
My friends, with faith soar up nor backward glance,
Make no solemn adieus,—no cries, no tears,—
But have them crown the victim with fresh flowers.
Oh, think what joy, what love, the soul will crown
In bridal sweet to heaven, 'tis love's own throne!
Then festoons, wreaths, and perfumes, precious scents,
And chants, and all harmonious instruments,
The soul convokes to heaven's high festival!
Before it leaves it should delight in all!

"Raise up your faces, that this fright has paled!
Let no one talk of burial bewailed,—
What oil o'er this, which was once me, to pour,—
Or in what urn my ashes they shall store:
What matters it to me if this vestment
Of flames or worms becomes the aliment?
That my cold earth, a part of common clay,
Be swept to floods or to the Gemonæ?

"This body of such elements composed,
Shall be no more than wave of ocean roused,
Or forest leaf the north wind drives away,
Or floating atom of the human clay,
Or heat of burning bushes, spread abroad,
Or the sand, moving in a crowded road.
But, parting, I this ingrate earth demise
A nobler débris, of what was Socrates,—

Genius to Plato,—to you all, virtue,—
To God my soul,—Meletus my life's view,
As to a starving dog, outside the door,
We give all that we have, and wish 'twere more."

Like as at sea, with oar 'mid waves, sad sighs
Mingle with sea-songs, while the oarsman plies,
While he was speaking, came a sad, low plaint,
Joining his voice, coming from the enceinte.
Alas! Myrto* we heard, her husband call;
Oh! what a moment for adieus to fall!
With wild look, and with an unsteady gait,
And holding to her robe by the side plait,
Two children, barefoot, walking at her sides,
With staggering footsteps to the bed she glides;
With her long hair, wiping away her tears,
The trace upon her visage still appears;
Over her features spread a deathly pallor,
One would have said that 'mid these scenes of sorrow
As Socrates felt not, he was not human,
That he was not afflicted, but the woman;
With terror seized, and love, at his aspect,
She wept beside him, with tender respect;
Thus at the feast of gods wept Cytheræ
Over Adonis' body in pity,
Sharing with Venus all her harrowing fears,
Trying to warm the marble with her tears.
With her mute mouth she touched him tenderly,
And seemed his God to love in like degree.

---

* Socrates had two wives, Xantippe and Myrto.

Then Socrates, the children in his arms,
Kissed her wet cheek, soothed softly their alarms;
We saw a tear—it was the very last—
Drop from his eyelid, and course slowly past:
With failing arm raising his son to heaven,
"I was his father,—now to Thee he's given!
I die,—Thou livest,—guard Thou these infants,
Oh, good God! keep them by Thy providence!"

But now, the poison circling in his veins,
The flow of his enfeebled blood enchains;
Which towards the head, like an exhausted wave,
Flowed weakly, and nor life nor warmth it gave;
His rigid limbs, with neither force nor color,
Likened to marble of Paros in pallor.
In vain Phedon, now bending o'er his feet,
Embraced, and with his hot breath tried to heat;
His face, hands, feet, grew cold against our hand,
Only his soul and voice were at command,
Resembling the white block, whence Galetus,
When an imported soul from Olympus,
At lover's call, descending from above,
Made his heart flutter with a tender love;
Opening an eye, unconscious of her power,
He, trembling, said, "'Tis marble now no more."

Was this, of death, the pallid majesty?
Or the fresh ray of immortality?
Beauty sublime from his brow radiates,
Bright as Aurora on Dydemus' heights;
And our hearts, while listening his last word,
Were turned in fear, believing to see God!

And now his eye to heaven silent glanced,
Then rolled back looks of saintly eloquence!
As one oppressed with sweet juice of the grape,
An hundred times his discourse puts in shape,—
As Orpheus, wandering in the dark abodes,
In interrupted words, spoke to the shades:

"Bend, Cypresses of Academus, o'er!
Bend, moan," said he, "me you will see no more!
As waves that strike the marble of Paros,
Bear on their foam a sound of weeping voice,
God has recalled your friend; it is His act,
And, mourning friends, you weep beneath the fact.
Behold Plato, Cebés, and children and a wife,
See, too, dear Phedon, friend of all my life,—
Will furtive go, at Phœbus' gleam above,
With stealthy step, to weep upon my grave!
And bending o'er my urn, linger and wait,
As if from my dust speech could suscitate—
As when, by my bedside, you listened to my voice,
Yes, friends, and I shall speak in many ways,—
But how far off it seems! how short absence,
Now, oh, great God! seems such distance!
You, who so far, trace of my steps have sought,
Lift up your eyes! behold! but they hear not!
Why, why this grief? these tears? which hinder me?
Myrto! oh, let me thy blonde tresses see!
Turn towards me thine eyes,—let not thy tears flow,—
Myrto, Plato, Cebés, friends, could you know!
Cease, Oracles! fall, voice of Porches,—fall!
Fly, ye vain lights, of ancient wisdom all!

Ye many-colored tints of a vain light,
Vanish ye all! before the truth more bright;
Union ineffable! I see before;
Listen! two, three, four ages more await
The heavenly rays, which, springing from this date,
With joy divine, will fill the universe!
Ye clouds of Earth, veiling from us God's face!
Phantom impostors! honored in his place,
Ye gods of flesh and blood! living and dead,
Vices on impure altars deified!—
Mercury with golden wings, and Cytheræ—
Adoring now theft, now adultery—
Ye great and small! ye race of Jupiter!
A little while, and your imperious crowd,
Filled with the errors of Olympus, bowed,
Will give place to One God—One over all!
Whom I adore, but whom no altars call.

"Wonders unveiling! O what harmony!
But who art thou, mysterious Genie?
Thou, who, concealing thyself to my eyes,
To heaven's gates conducts me by thy voice?
Who, as winged messenger, bears company,
And fans me with thy wings caressingly?
Art thou the Apollo of this holy hill?
Or some swift Mercury, sent at love's will?
Art angel's lyre? or glad Caduceus?
Or art thou only a sweet thought, to bless?"

Oppressed, his breath within his chest now came
Too feebly to express his thoughts,—a name

Seemed on his parted lips, alas! to die;
And all his breath came to him in a sigh:
As, ready to alight on the home shore,
We see the Swan flapping her wings before;
After light dreams, then comatose he laid,
Devoted Cebés, bending o'er, essayed
Life's glance to his poor eyes to bring once more;
And asked him several questions, as before.
"Dost sleep?" said he; "and death, is it a dream?"
He roused: "'Tis an awakening," said, "supreme."
"Thy mind, is't clouded by shadows funest?"
"No, purer days gleam, a kind Heaven's behest."
"Hear'st thou no fearful cries, no groan?"
"I hear gold stars murmuring but One Name."
"How do you feel?" "As the young chrysales,
When to the earth they exuviæ dismiss,
And open to the sun their feeble eyes,
The breath of morning floating in the skies."
"Do not deceive us,—thy soul, is it well?"
"Believe this smile that she is immortal."
"Why linger you in this imperfect state?"
"I, like a ship, await a breeze to inflate."
"From whence comes it? from Heaven: yet more indite."
"No, leave my soul in peace to take her flight."
He said, and shut his eyes, as his last choice:
And rested some time without breath or voice;
A ray of life, still wandering to and fro,
With gleams of purple lighted his pale brow,
Like at pure evening of Autumn season,
When the bright Sun quitted the horizon,

One straggling ray from shadows is descried,
Giving the passing clouds a golden side.

Again more feebly seemed he to respire,
The sweet smile mounting on his features higher;
"To God who frees," said he, "a sacrifice.
He cures me." Cebés said, "Of what?"—"Of life?"
Now a low sigh from his lips floats away,
Soft as the Bee's wing of Mount Hybla.
Was this—I know not what—a holy goal?
It seemed within us like a second soul!
As the frail lilies on the waters rest,
His head bent slowly down upon his breast,
His lids, that death even now half closed,
Firmer upon his dimming eye reposed,
Seeming, as formerly, in their deepened shade
His thought to veil,—profounder silence made.
His words arrested from his last effort,
From his half-opened lips effluence sought;
His features, where life had its empire lost,
As in one sweet, eternal smile were cast;
His hand, which his habitual gesture kept
With one extended finger, pointing up;
And when the first rays of the new-born Sun
Scattered, at morn, the shadows one by one,
As lighthouse, seen upon a summit lorn,
His brow it gilded, 'mid the gray of morn.

One might say, Venus came, with sacred grief,
To weep over her lover's last of life!
That saddened Phœbus, with his palest Sun,
Caressed, at night, the bosom of Endymion:

Or that, from heaven, the sage's happy soul,
Revisiting terrestrial border-fold,
Seeing again the body it had fled,
Celestial beauty gave as it lay dead!
As a star, cradled in a cloudless sky,
Its image seeks upon the waters nigh.

They heard no other word, no plaint, no sigh,—
'Twas thus he died—if this can be, "*to die.*"

"All those who have known Socrates," said Xenophon, "regret him, for they found him the greatest aid in the succor of virtue.

"I have known it well; I have depicted what I have seen:—so pious that he dared not undertake anything without first interrogating his conscience, which he called his 'Genie,'—'the counsel of heaven;' so just that he never permits himself to do the least injustice to any one, but benefited every one who went to him; so temperate that he preferred always that which was most suitable to that which was most agreeable; so infallible in prudence that he was never deceived between the good and the bad. Such Socrates appeared to me, truly the best and, by this means, the happiest of mortals of his epoch and his country."

XV.

As for us, we admire with Xenophon the wisdom of the philosopher of Greece, yet we cannot prevent ourselves from preferring to him the greater wisdom of India, of China, and above all that of the Christian religion.

The wisdom of Socrates is only intelligence,—it is not love. It thinks well, but it is not devoted enough. Sacrifice, the complement of all virtue and the price of all truth, is wanting. Notwithstanding the political punishment of Socrates, it was not a religious sacrifice.

He is a philosopher, not a martyr. He accommodates himself to the manners, to the belief, to the vices even, of his times and his country. He gives spiritual and useful counsels to those who ask them of him, but he also countenances vice in the young men and women.

He believed in one God, divine, intelligent, and whose providence was over all the world; and yet he paid public honors to carnal divinities and multiple forms in the image of man.

He did well, but he did for himself more than for truth. His death itself was a good fortune for his destiny, as he became by it a great man.

"I am old," said he to Xenophon, "I shall only decline in my mind, and hence it is the best time to die!"

Socrates did not show much tenderness to human beings,—not even for his wife and children; always more a man of a reflective turn of mind than a man

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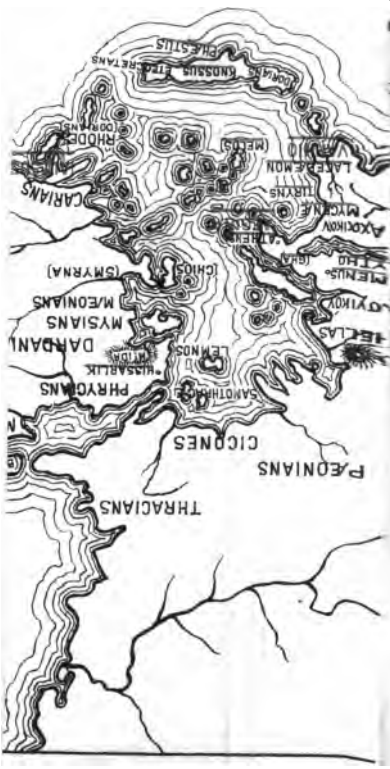

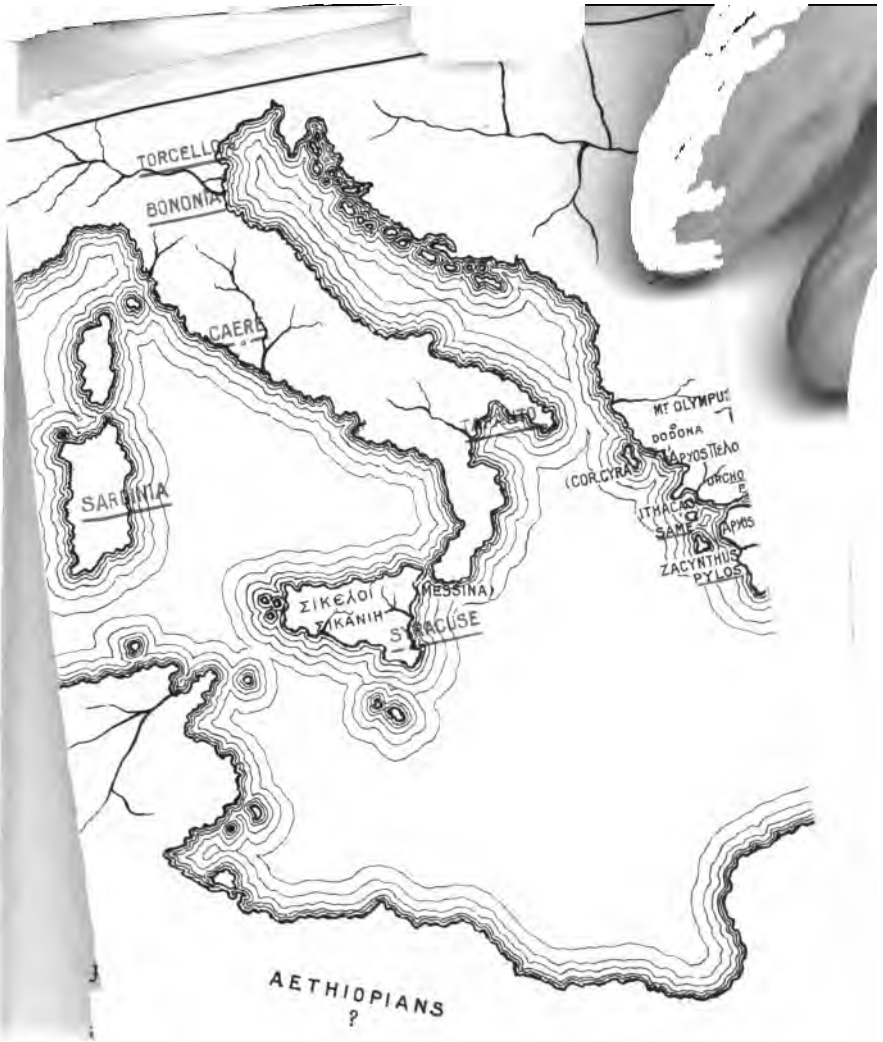
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devoted to his fellow-men. Some of his interviews, sublime as they were, attest to this defect in his character,—this want of divine charity in his nature and wisdom.

He railed sometimes,—he mocked often,—he joked always.

Irony, which renders even the truth offensive, is the perpetual form of his dialogues. He proceeds by captious interrogatories, as if to force his opponent to wind himself up. He leads him in a roundabout way, concealing from him, artfully, the end to which he wishes to conduct him. He then takes his antagonist by his own avowals,—takes as it were truth in a net!

He is an epilogue,—never a lyric. Plato, his godlike disciple, put wings to him, but he often draggled them on the ground.

From all this we conclude that Socrates was neither the most wise, nor the most virtuous, nor the most religious of all the philosophers of antiquity; but that he was the most intellectual and amiable of all the honest men of Athens; that he knew how to think well, how to speak well, how to die well; he also knew how to live well, but that, in a word, there was too much method in his wisdom and too much management in his virtue. Loving-kindness was not in all he did.

FINIS.

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